"THE BIOGEN SERIES," No. 3

A BUDDHIST CATECHISM

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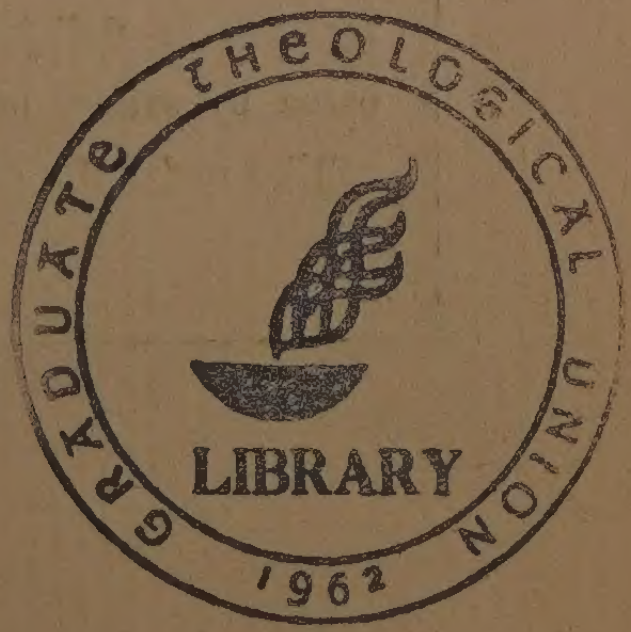

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ESTES & LAURIAT.

NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA SAMBUDDHASSA.

A

BUDDHIST CATECHISM,

ACCORDING TO THE CANON OF THE SOUTHERN CHURCH.

By HENRY S. OLCOTT,

PRESIDENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ETC.

Approved and recommended for use in Buddhist schools by H. SUMANGALA, *High Priest of the Sripada and Galle, and Principal of the Widyodaya Parivena.*

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM THE SINHALESE FOURTEENTH THOUSAND,

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

By ELLIOTT COUES.

BOSTON:

ESTES AND LAURIAT.

1885.

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CERTIFICATE.

I HEREBY certify that I have carefully examined the Sinhalese version of the Catechism prepared by Colonel H. S. Olcott, and that the same is in agreement with the Canon of the Southern Buddhist Church. I recommend the work to teachers in Buddhist Schools, and to all others who may wish to impart information to beginners concerning the essential features of our Religion.

H. SUMANGALA,

High Priest of the Sripada and Galle,
Principal of the Widyodaya Parivena.

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AMERICAN EDITOR'S PREFACE.

RANGOON, BRITISH BURMA,
March 9, 1885.

PROFESSOR ELLIOTT COUES, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR, — So much interest is taken in the subject of Buddhism, not only throughout Europe, but in America as well, that I should be glad if you could see your way to bring out an American edition of my "Buddhist Catechism." Its fidelity as an exposition of the canon of the Southern Buddhist Church is avouched by the certificate of the High Priest Sumangala of Ceylon. Not only have seventeen thousand copies of it in the Sinhalese language been distributed throughout the schools and homes of Ceylon, but a Burmese edition, of fifteen thousand copies, in the vernacular and in English, is now going through the press at this place. The translator is a Burmese official of good position, and the text has been revised and criticised by a committee of "Elders" who are thoroughly orthodox Buddhists. An excellent edition in French appeared at Paris last year, and one in German is now preparing at Munich. With these evidences of its trustworthiness as an elementary exposition of Exoteric Orthodox Southern Buddhism, you may not be unwilling to stand as its godfather in our own country.

Faithfully yours,

H. S. OLCOTT.

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I FIND that I shall have the pleasure of answering my esteemed friend's letter by sending him a copy of his interesting and valuable little book, bearing an American imprint and also, I fear, quite heavily freighted with his American editor's notes. But for these, of course, he is not responsible, except indirectly, through the wonderful quality of suggestiveness which his presentation of the subject has had for an unworthy one of his lay-cheelas. If the Notes subserve no other end, they at least obviate the necessity of any lengthy preface by way of introducing the Catechism to American readers,—be they only idly curious about a strange thing, or merely affected with Buddhism as a fashionable craze, or be they, as is hoped, appreciative of one of the most significant signs of the times, and therefore desirous of authentic information respecting a system of moral and religious philosophy which sways the mind and heart of a third of the human race.

The official "authority" of the Catechism is as indisputable as that of any Christian catechism which goes out with a bishop's *imprimatur* or sign of the Holy Cross, ansate or other; it is, in fact, exactly what the title purports. This satisfies the technical requirements of the case. No real lover of truth, no earnest seeker for the blessed "That which is," need be told that the real authority of the book, like that of any other in Christendom or elsewhere, depends entirely upon whether the statements it contains are true or not.

"Anathema" means anachronism now; else the editor himself would save any authority the trouble of pronouncing it against a member of the Church Militant who should read this candidate for an Index Expurgatorius. No good Catholic should read it, because it is too much like the wisdom of his own communion to have been

drawn from a heathen well, and too little like what is taught to those uninitiated in the councils of the Vatican. No Episcopalian, because the virility of India is as shocking as the scarlet of Rome to the decorous mugwump that he is in matters of the Mother Church's administration, which disconcerted even Henry VIII. No true-blue Presbyterian or Calvinist, because if anything could make him "bluer" than he is, it would be to shake his faith in hell. No Lutheran, because Gautama and Luther were both Protestants, and the contrast between their personal characters might be painful. No Methodist, because there is too much method in it to suit orthodox madness. No Baptist, because it is too "hard-shelled" to be cracked without immersion. In fine, no Protestant of any shade of disbelief or discontent should read it, because it does not protest enough; it does not even protest against the difference between Jehovah and Juggernauth. Besides, it seems too much like giving him change in his own coin for the impertinence of presuming that a Buddhist needs his missionaries, or that anything in his religion or irreligion could be news to an educated Hindu. Not even a Unitarian should read it, because he is as likely to agree with it as with his own sect on any theological point; nor a pseudo-scientist, because it might make him suspect himself of a soul. Who then? Whoever thinks for himself, believes in his fellow-man, and knows that *anima mundi* is never anachronistic.

Catechisms are for children; and criticism of this one should proceed upon that understanding, — at any rate so far as the author's text is concerned. The editor will add that it is the only catechism he ever studied that he could see much sense in, or make much use of; and probably his experience is not exceptional. But there

are children of larger as well as of smaller growth, of and to whom he might say further, did he not here recall the conclusion of a famous magic motto, — *c'est le taire.*

Aside from esoteric Buddhistic and theosophical literature professing to teach the wisdom-religion, — that divine science which the "chosen noble few" have known since Man first knew himself a God, — one of the wisest, soundest, and most learned treatises on religion that has ever come under the present writer's observation is entitled "The Keys of the Creeds." It is anonymous, but purports to be by a Catholic; the preface is dated in London. One edition was published in 1875 in New York (G. P. Putman's Sons).

The editor gives the Olcott text verbatim, except touching a word here and there, not in the slightest degree affecting the sense, and setting the author's appendix among the footnotes. The Colombo edition used for copy was not very well printed, and there are other reasons why the editor should feel dubious about the orthography, and especially the accentuation, of the Sanscrit words which occur. But the Catechism is not a treatise on linguistics; so philology is of the least possible consequence in a case where *de minimis non curat lex.* The editor's notes are bracketed, and bear his initial; beyond them, neither his credit nor his responsibility extends for anything that the volume does or does not contain.

E. C.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 30, 1885.

PREFACE

TO THE FOURTEENTH THOUSAND.

THAT a demand exists for a succinct exposition of the beliefs of Sinhalese Buddhists has been proved by the large sales of this little work and by the general favor with which it has been received by the non-Buddhistic as well as the Buddhistic public. It is within bounds to say that it has already found its way into ten thousand Sinhalese households, and that many thousands of Buddhist children have for the first time derived from it that elementary knowledge of their religion which until the appearance of this Catechism they could get neither from parents nor school-teachers. The translation of the Catechism into the German, Siamese, Japanese, and Tamil languages is additional evidence of its circulation. It was announced to be, and has by the learned High Priest Sumangala Thero been

indorsed, as a presentation of Orthodox Southern Buddhism; as such only should it be regarded, and not as the creed of any particular Buddhistic sect or individual Buddhist. The author, confining himself strictly to his subject, did not make the comparison he easily might have made between the ideas respectively held by the Northern and Southern Buddhists, — those of Tibet on the one hand, and those of Ceylon on the other, — countries which are the acknowledged foci of the purest doctrine prevalent in their respective geographical divisions. He is even less disposed to do so now, since there is reason to expect that the Tibetan philosophy will shortly be made public, for the first time, by Tibetan proficients most amply qualified to speak.[1] Orientalists will then have the means of comparing, and possibly of understanding more clearly than hitherto, the texts that have so long puzzled them. The first steps are also being taken (in part through the obliging help of the British officials) to bring the Buddhistic scholars of Ceylon into closer communion than heretofore with their co-religionists

[1 See, in this connection, the already well-known work entitled "Esoteric Buddhism," by A. P. Sinnett. "The Theosophist" — a monthly journal published in Madras — and numerous publications of the different branches of the Theosophical Society in India, Europe, and America, will also serve to some understanding of the body of doctrine which has become known under the name chosen by Mr. Sinnett as the title of his volume. — C.]

of Japan and Burma, — a relationship which cannot fail to do good. Letters received from several non-Buddhistic countries since the first appearance of the Catechism show that various agencies — among them, conspicuously, the wide circulation of Mr. Edwin Arnold's beautiful poem, "The Light of Asia" — have created a sentiment in favor of Buddhistic philosophy which constantly gains strength. It seems to commend itself especially to free-thinkers of every shade of opinion. Three French gentlemen of high position who recently visited Ceylon and made public profession of Buddhism by taking the "Three Refuges" at Colombo and Galle temples, told the High Priest that the whole school of French Positivists were practically Buddhists, and would not hesitate to follow the example set by themselves. And it is reported to the author, by a Sinhalese gentleman of high birth, that the eminent Professor Ernst Haeckel, in a conversation which occurred during his recent visit to Ceylon, told him that, so far as explained to him, the Buddhistic theory of the eternity of matter and force, and other particulars, were identical with the latest inductions of science. This good opinion of Buddhism must increase in strength among scientific men as its corruptions are cleared away and the veritable teaching of the Lord Buddha is discovered. In common with esoteric Hindu philosophy and other esoteric cults derived from the pre-Aryan and Irano-Aryan parent source,

esoteric Buddhism, wherever found, rests upon the assumption of a true Individualism unerringly developing effects from causes under the universal reign of law, and utterly scouts any theory of miracle. How very similar this is to the position of modern science need not be discussed; since we have, amid the testimony of a cloud of witnesses, that of the lamented Professor J. W. Draper, who wrote: "The spirit that imparted life to this movement [that of science], that has animated these discoveries and inventions, is Individualism." [1]

The author, in fulfilment of the promise given in the first edition, has embodied in the present text such changes as have

[1] Conflict, p. 324. [Individualism is the key-note of the Emersonian philosophy. In the physical world, as we know it, the whole course of nature tends from generals to particulars, from unity to plurality, from simplicity to complexity, by development, differentiation, modification, specialization, both in form and in function, — by evolution, in a word. And in the psychic world, as far as we know ourselves, the same or parallel processes or sequences go on, the whole tendency being to individuation of character, and by so much the separation of every human mind or soul from every other. Much as all men may possess in common, there is, or may be, more that is peculiar to each; and such individualization seems to be one of the purposes, as it is certainly one of the results, of our present state of being. It is likewise an evidence of the power of the spirit and of its infinite possibilities, in comparison with the lower actualities of those mechanical and chemical forces which encompass us. — C.]

by impartial critics been shown to be advantageous, or have suggested themselves to his own mind. Additional questions have also been introduced to define points not previously covered. Among these subjects are the Five and Ten Precepts; the relationship between the *personalities* evolved in successive births along any given line of individual life, or *vital undulation*, if a new phrase be permitted; the better definition of Bódhisatship; the cause of the lapse of memory between successive births; the nature of *Taṇha;* the anti-Buddhistic character of certain superstitious rites; the innate distinction between Buddhism and religions, properly so called; Arahatship; etc. A few explanatory notes have also been added. The author will also at all times thankfully receive suggestions for further improvements.

H. S. O.

GALLE, CEYLON, Aug. 2, 1882.

PREFACE

TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION.

BEING intended for the use of beginners, this little work aims only to present the main facts in the life of Gautama Buddha and the essential features of his doctrine. Strange to say, it is unique of its kind in Ceylon, notwithstanding that the missionaries have scattered their Christian catechisms broadcast in the island, and for many years have been taunting the Sinhalese with the puerility and absurdity of their religion. To whatever cause it may be due, this apathy is something to be deplored by every Buddhist or admirer of the Buddhist philosophy. The present Catechism is largely a compilation from the works of T. W. Rhys-Davids, Esq., Bishop Bigandet, Sir Coomara Swamy, R. C. Childers, Esq., and the Revs. Samuel Beal and R. Spence Hardy; in a few cases their exact language has been

used. But having been assisted by the Venerable High Priest H. Sumangala, Principal, and the Priest H. Devamitta, of Widyodaya College, the author's treatment of some of the subjects will be found in certain respects to differ from that of those writers. Truth to say, a very incomplete popular notion of what orthodox Buddhism is, seems to prevail in Western countries. The folk-lore and fairy stories upon which some of our principal Orientalists have mainly based their commentaries are no more orthodox Buddhism than the wild monkish tales of the Middle Ages are orthodox Christianity. Only the authenticated utterances of Sâkya Muni himself are admitted as orthodox. Deeper analysis will unquestionably prove to Western scholars that the Kapilavastu sage taught, six centuries before the Christian era, not only a peerless code of morals, but also a philosophy so broad and comprehensive as to have anticipated the inductions of modern research and speculation. The signs abound that of all the world's great creeds that one is destined to be the much talked-of Religion of the Future which shall be found in least antagonism with Nature and with Natural Law.[1] Who dare predict that Buddhism will not be the one chosen?

[1 Perhaps no more mischievous word was ever invented than "supernatural," unless it be "metaphysics." True, Aristotle made the latter simply the heading of a chapter that came after another, and knew per-

Though the author gratefully acknowledges his obligations to Messrs. E. F. Perera, Proctor, and W. D'Abrew, for their services as interpreters between the reverend priests and himself, yet he claims for the many imperfections that will doubtless be found in the following pages the indulgence of all who have

fectly well what he meant by it; but others have been less discriminating. So with "supernatural," which has a meaning, and a proper one, rightly understood, but which has been so abused and vulgarized that it has come to be applied by many to anything unnatural, something that is not and cannot be, — to the impossible, in short. Its absurdity may be exposed by inventing its logical converse, — "sub-natural," "infra-natural," "hypo-physical." But nothing can be above nature, any more than below it, or aside from it in any other way. Spirit is as "natural" as matter; and "natural law in the spiritual world" is axiomatic. "Higher" laws than those, glimpses of the operation of which in the physical phenomenal world we acquire by our bodily senses, may and doubtless do operate in the "unseen universe;" but such are not "supernatural." What we believe depends entirely upon what we know; and the "religion," or codification of belief, or formulation of faith, which a thoughtful man may be inclined to profess, is likely to be that which accords best with the facts in his case as he understands them. The religion which makes least show of "supernatural" authority, which keeps "miracles" and "revelations" most in the background, which resorts to no desperate device of a mystery, but grounds its claims upon its agreement in the main with the facts of human consciousness and those results of human experience which any one may verify for himself if he be so minded, — a religion, in short, which is natural enough to be reasonable, and human enough to suit humanity, yet divine enough to satisfy man's most divine aspirations, — should be entitled to respect and reverence. — C.]

tried to do such work as this through intermediaries. His ignorance of Pali and Sinhalese has prevented his doing anything like adequate justice to the subject; but he hopes to avail himself in future editions of the criticisms the present one may call forth.

H. S. O.

A BUDDHIST CATECHISM.

1. *Q. Of what religion*[1] *are you?*

A. The Buddhist.

[1] The word "religion" is most inappropriate to apply to Buddhism, which is not a religion, but a moral philosophy, as I have shown in Question 128. But by common usage it has been applied to all groups of people who profess a special moral doctrine, and is so employed by statisticians. The Sinhalese Buddhists have never yet had any conception of what Europeans imply in the etymological construction of the Latin root of this term.[a] In their creed there is no such thing as a "bind-

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[[a] The author here assumes the usual etymology of "religion," — from the Latin *religare*, "to bind." This, however, is much disputed. Some derive the word from *religere*, "to gather," "to collect," in the sense of the gathering of a body of religious doctrine or the formulation of religious belief. These etymologies should both probably give way to that which allies "religion" to *religens*, "pious," "fearing the Gods," from

2. *Q. What is a Buddhist?*

A. One who professes to be a follower of our Lord Buddha, and accepts his doctrine.

3. *Q. Was Buddha a God?*

A. No.

4. *Q. Was he a man?*

ing" in the Christian sense, — a submission to or merging of self in a divine being. *Agama* is their vernacular word to express their relation to Buddhism and Buddha. It is pure Sanskrit, and means "approach," or "coming;" and as *Buddha* is "enlightenment," the compound word by which they indicate Buddhism — *Buddhagama* — would be properly rendered as an "approach" or "coming" to "enlightenment," or possibly as a following of the doctrine of Sâkya Muni. The missionaries, finding *agama* ready to their hand, adopted it as the equivalent for "religion;" and "Christianity" is written by them *Christianiagama*, whereas it should be *Christianibandhana*, for *bandhana* is the etymological equivalent for "religion." With this explanation I continue, for the convenience of the ordinary reader, to employ, under protest, the familiar word when speaking of Buddhistic philosophy.

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relegere or *religere*, in that one of its senses which means "to go over in mind," "to con, ponder, meditate," etc. "Religion," in this sense of the word, is substantially a system of moral philosophy rather than any form of obligation; and the term is therefore not entirely inappropriate to a body of doctrine which rests so largely as Buddhism does upon that "enlightenment" or "wisdom" which comes of seclusion, meditation, and the communion of the soul with itself. — C.]

A. In form a man, but internally[1] not like other men; that is to say, in moral and mental qualities he excelled all other men of his own or subsequent[2] times.

5. *Q. Was Buddha his name?*

A. No; Buddha is the name of a condition or state of mind.

6. *Q. What is its meaning?*

A. Enlightened; as one is who has the perfect wisdom.

[1 "Internally;" *i. e.* as to his "state of mind," as one might say, or, more figuratively, "in his heart." In Oriental philosophies the "mind," or "thinking principle," is frequently called the "internal organ" (*manas*), upon the modifications of which the form or state of the soul is considered to depend. "Inner consciousness" is a similar term in common use among us; and in general, with mystics, occultists, and other students or masters of psychic science, "internal" or "interior," conditions are considered "superior," and are contrasted with "external" or "inferior" states of mind, which depend upon the evidence of the bodily senses, and are therefore subject to merely intellectual qualifications. — C.]

[2 Non-Buddhists, of course, may take exception to this statement, each in favor of the founder of his own system of religious belief or moral philosophy. But Christians can hardly do so with propriety, since they have identified Jesus with God, thus removing him from the human category as beyond all comparison with other men. Yet it seems but right here to recognize the exalted and illustrious master of perfect wisdom, the gentle Nazarene, the very Christ and later brother-adept of Gautama, whose similar life and nearly identical teachings have so long illumined the Occident with the light of divine truth, in spite of all that many of his nominal adherents have been able to effect to the contrary. — C.]

7. *Q. What was Buddha's real name then?*

A. Siddârtha was his royal name, and Gautama, or Gotama, his family name. He was Prince of Kapilavastu.

8. *Q. Who were his father and mother?*

A. King Suddhôdana and Queen Maya.

9. *Q. What people did this King reign over?*

A. The Sâkyas, an Aryan tribe.

10. *Q. Where was Kapilavastu?*

A. In India, a hundred miles northeast of the city of Benares, and about forty miles from the Himalaya Mountains.

11. *Q. On what river?*

A. The Rohini; now called the Kohana.

12. *Q. When was Prince Siddârtha born.*

A. Six hundred and twenty-three [1] years before the Christian era.

13. *Q. Did the Prince have luxuries and splendors like other princes?*

A. He did; his father, the King, built him, for the three Indian seasons, three magnificent palaces, of nine, five, and three stories respectively, and handsomely decorated. Around each

[1 The exact date is disputed (like that of the beginning of the Christian era itself), and few authors venture upon unqualified statements in this particular. A usual assignation of the lifetime of Gautama is "about" *620–†543 B. C. — C.]

palace were gardens of the most beautiful and fragrant flowers, with fountains spouting water, the trees full of singing-birds, and peacocks strutting over the ground.

14. *Q. Was he living alone?*

A. No; in his sixteenth year he was married to the Princess Yasôdhara, daughter of the King Suprabuddha. Many beautiful maidens, skilled in dancing and music, were also in continual attendance to amuse him.

15. *Q. How, amid all this luxury, could a prince become all-wise?*

A. He had such a natural wisdom that when he was but a child[1] he seemed to understand all arts and sciences almost without study. He had the best teachers; but they could teach him nothing that he did not seem immediately to comprehend.

16. *Q. Did he become Buddha in his splendid palaces?*

A. No; he left all, and went alone into the jungle.

17. *Q. Why did he do this?*

A. To discover the cause of our sufferings and the way to escape from them.

18. *Q. Was it selfishness that made him do this?*

A. No; it was boundless love for all beings that made him sacrifice himself for their good.

[1 For an instance of the same precocity attributed to Jesus, cf. Luke, ii. 46 *et seq.* — C.]

19. *Q. What did he sacrifice?*

A. His beautiful palaces, his riches, his luxuries, his pleasures, his soft beds, his fine dresses, his rich food, his kingdom; he even left his beloved wife and his only son.

20. *Q. What was this son's name?*

A. The Prince Rahula.

21. *Q. Did any other man ever sacrifice so much for our sake?*

A. Not one;[1] this is why Buddhists so love him, and why good Buddhists try to be like him.

22. *Q. How old was he when he went to the jungle?*

A. He was in his twenty-ninth year.

23. *Q. What finally determined him to leave all that men usually love so much, and go to the jungle?*

A. A Deva[2] appeared to him when driving out in his chariot, under four impressive forms on four different occasions.

[1 See note 2, p. 13. Aside from the qualification there implied, depending upon the deification of Jesus, any Christian might demur that the sacrifice of one's life to the highest altruistic ideals is a greater one than the surrender of all life's possible possessions to the same end. — C.]

2 See Question 155. [Needless to cite numberless instances of similar apparitions scattered throughout the Jewish, Christian, and other scriptures which treat of spiritual affairs. Among the best known or most generally accredited among Occidental peoples are those of "Jehovah" in the burning bush, as recorded in writings popularly ascribed to Moses, and of

24. *Q. What were these different forms?*

A. Those of a very old man broken down by age, of a sick man, of a decaying corpse, and of a dignified hermit.

"Christ" to Saul of Tarsus. Corresponding phenomena, involving the apparition of spiritual intelligences in more or less visible and tangible form, constantly occurring at the present day, are known to students of psychics as "veridical phantoms," and to American Spiritualists as "form materializations." I say "corresponding phenomena;" but it must not be inferred that the manifesting intelligences are usually, if ever, of as high an order of spiritual beings as those which have become historical in connection with the foundings of religions and philosophies. It cannot be presumed that a very exalted spirit ever did return to earth's plane and become visible to the physical senses of man, except as a messenger of the Most High or in response to the most powerful invocation of some mighty master and adept in psychics, the purity of whose life and the power of whose will make him a peer of the Gods. Apparitions may be roughly divided into two main classes, — 1. Those which manifest themselves to a single person, who perceives them by his psychic senses, as in religious ecstasy, trance, clairvoyance, clairaudience, somnambulism, or other hypnotic conditions. Most of the world's great Mystics and Illuminati have such visions, — generally for a special purpose on the part of lofty and masterful spiritual intelligences, though evil ones of equal potency may also make themselves apparent under similar circumstances. In the case cited in the text, the manifesting spirit, though of a high order, seems to have belonged to the next category, — 2. Apparitions visible to the natural bodily senses, and therefore to any number of persons alike. With some illustrious exceptions, which will occur to any one versed in the history of churches, this second class of apparitions is of a low order of intelligences, — not necessarily, however, vicious or hurtful, though little reliance is to

25. *Q. Did he alone see these visions?*

A. No; his attendant, Channa, also saw them.

26. *Q. Why should these sights, so familiar to everybody, have caused him to go to the jungle?*

A. We often see such sights. He had not; and they made a deep impression on his mind.

27. *Q. Why had he not also seen them?*

A. The astrologers had foretold at his birth that he would one day resign his kingdom and become a Buddha. The King, his father, not wishing to lose his son, had carefully prevented his seeing any sights that might suggest to him human misery and death. No one was allowed even to speak of such things

be placed upon what they may appear or claim to be (for reasons which I shall not here specify). Such apparitions or manifestations are, *for the most part*, of two kinds, — (*a*) Either they proceed from non-human elementary beings who are able to affect human organisms in various ways and produce a variety of sensible physical effects; or (*b*) they proceed from the souls of disembodied persons little removed from the material plane of existence. For the most part, the common phenomena of what is called "Spiritualism," of every-day occurrence, are due to the agencies noted under (*a*) and (*b*) of the second category. Purely subjective affections of the mind, unwittingly externalized and so seeming to be objective, as well as phantasms of the living, otherwise known as projections of one's double or astral body, are not here taken into account, — the former, because they have no objectivity, and are therefore not real apparitions; the latter, because they differ little from (*b*). — C.]

to the Prince. He was almost like a prisoner in his lovely palaces and flower-gardens. They were surrounded with high walls; and inside everything was made as beautiful as possible, so that he might not want to go and see the sorrow and distress that are in the world.

28. *Q. Was he so kind-hearted that his father feared he might really want to sacrifice himself for the world's sake?*

A. Yes; he seems to have felt for all beings so strong a pity and love as that.

29. *Q. And how did he expect to learn the cause of sorrow in the jungle?*

A. By removing far away from all that could prevent his deeply thinking of the causes of sorrow and the nature of man.

30. *Q. How did he escape from the palace?*

A. One night, when all were asleep, he arose, took a last look at his sleeping wife and infant son, summoned Channa, mounted his favorite white horse, Kantaka, and rode to the palace gates. The Devas had thrown a deep sleep upon his father's guards who watched the gate, so they heard not the noise of his horse's hoofs.

31. *Q. But the gate was locked, was it not?*

A. Yes; but the Devas caused it to open without the slightest noise, and he rode away into the darkness.

32. *Q. Whither did he go?*

A. To the River Anoma, a long way from Kapilavastu.

33. *Q. What did he then do?*

A. He sprang from his horse, cut off his beautiful hair with his sword, and giving his ornaments and horse to Channa, ordered him to take them back to his father, the King.

34. *Q. What then?*

A. He went afoot towards Râjagriha, the capital city of Mâgadha.

35. *Q. Why there?*

A. In the jungle of Uruwela were hermits, very wise men, whose pupil he afterwards became, in the hope of finding the knowledge of which he was in search.

36. *Q. Of what religion were they?*

A. The Hindu religion; they were Brahmans.

37. *Q. What did they teach?*

A. That by severe penances and torture of the body a man may acquire perfect wisdom.

38. *Q. Did the Prince find this to be so?*

A. No. He learned their systems and practised all their penances; but he could not thus discover the reason for human sorrow.

39. *Q. What did he then do?*

A. He went away into the forest near a place called

Buddha Gaya, and spent several years in deep meditation and fasting.

40. *Q. Was he alone?*

A. No; five companions attended him.

41. *Q. What were their names?*

A. Kondanya, Bhaddaji, Wappa, Mahanama, and Assaji.

42. *Q. What plan of discipline did he adopt to open his mind to know the whole truth?*

A. He sat and meditated, shutting out from his sight and hearing all that was likely to interrupt his inward reflections.

43. *Q. Did he fast?*

A. Yes; through the whole period. He took less and less food and water; until, it is said,[1] he ate scarcely more than one grain of rice or sesamum seed a day.

[1 Exoterically, to impress a child or unthinking adult. The narration of Gautama's fruitless endeavors to attain Buddhaship by the punishment of the body conveys a valuable lesson to those who expect to improve their psychic senses, and so strengthen the soul, by mere fasting or other penitential observances, in simple obedience to the authority of a church such as the Roman or Anglican. It is true that like observances are seldom more than a mild and decorous subserviency to existing ecclesiastical regulations, followed by no special psychic results. But supposing that a soul's religious emotions and spiritual aspirations induce it to strain its relations with the flesh by denying and mortifying the carnal envelope to any considerable extent, the result is likely to be the reverse of salutary to the soul, unless the process is very gradually effected

44. *Q. Did this give him the wisdom he longed for?*

A. No. He grew thinner and thinner in body and fainter in strength; until, one day, as he was slowly walking here and there and meditating, his vital force suddenly left him, and he fell to the ground unconscious.

and wisely directed, both by purity and fixity of purpose and strength of will. Otherwise, the soul (the spiritual body, the astral form of the spirit) is apt to share the resulting debility of the physical body, even to the extent of enfeebling or deranging the mind. Clarity of the psychic senses and potency of the psychic faculties — in other words, the utmost efficiency of the substance of the soul, operating as a psychic force for the manifestation of the spirit — are best attained by overpowering a strong, healthy body and subjecting its desires, however imperious, to the domination of a still more imperious will-power. It is only the weak of will and the infirm or impure of purpose who need first to sap the strength of the body in order to overcome its affections; and as such incarnations cannot reasonably expect to attain much psychic clarity or potency in this world, it is scarcely wise for them to make the attempt at the expense of their physical vigor. Mere material existence, conducted with moderation in all things, is preferable for all embodiments of the lower grades of spiritual activity. Respecting the perils of real scientific psychic training, — a discipline of which fasts and other penances of various Occidental ecclesiastical organizations are the feeble lingering remains in this crassly materialistic age, — I cannot do better than quote the following passage of the author's: "The student should very clearly notice that modern mesmeric science is the key to all understanding of ancient Yoga, however practised and by whatever school. Yoga is self-mesmerization. It differs from ordinary mesmeric operations in that the subject in this case is the mystic's own body, instead of another person. In both examples

45. *Q. What did his companions think of that?*

A. They fancied he was dead; but after a time he revived.

46. *Q. What then?*

A. The thought came to him that knowledge could never be reached by mere fasting or bodily suffering; that it must be

there is a development of a current of psychic aura, — if the term is permissible, — and its direction by an operative will upon a selected receptive object. The Yogin develops the same potential aura, but turns it in upon himself. He first, by determined concentration, vanquishes the natural restlessness of the body and the supremacy of the physical appetites, reducing the physical self to the condition of a passive subject. Then only when his will has fully asserted its force can he develop within himself those transcendent powers of intelligence which are fitted to observe the laws and phenomena of the spiritual world. The *Siddhis* of Patánjali mark the successive stages of this self-unfolding, the last stage of all being a self-induced ecstasis, in which, unlike the ecstasis of the somnambule which has been developed under a mesmerizer's passes, there is not only consciousness, but also self-control. The ecstatic Yogin can return from the highest flight into the supernal spheres, and by an effort of the will terminate his *samadhi* whenever he likes. But the somnambulic seer is always in danger of being so transported by his radiant visions as to snap the thin cord which still links him to earthly life." Regarding *certain* practices of Yoga science, the same author condemns them as "the bigotry of psychic training, bearing almost the same relation to what is essential as the most superstitious rites of exoteric religions do to the spirit or esoteric aspects of religion proper. These lower practices of Yoga science are, moreover, dangerous unless conducted under the vigilant eye of a master who is himself profoundly versed in the theory and art of the subject. Many rash experimentalists, being still bound by their

gained by the opening of the mind. He had just barely escaped death from self-starvation, but had not obtained the perfect wisdom. So he decided to eat, that he might live at least long enough to become wise. He therefore received some food of a nobleman's daughter who saw him lying at the

carnal nature, and thus unfit for rapid progress, have been made insane, and even driven to suicide. The struggle of the base animal nature against any attempt to curb it is one from which only the grandest souls can hope to issue victorious. And even to them the task is almost hopeless, unless they have secured the needed aids of a teacher, a pure place, strict seclusion from the world, and a natural power of self-mastery. As but few in any human group are able to provide themselves with these requisites, few become adepts. And Nature herself has wisely so ordered it; for if a majority of men could become adepts, the foundations of society would soon be destroyed, and social chaos be upon us."

The "psychic aura," above said, is the means of manifesting what Professor Crookes calls "psychic force," the effects of which he has repeatedly measured by very delicate methods. It consists in a psychic substance which has a number of names, one of them being "biogen."

Adepts in the operation of currents of biogen very commonly produce phenomenal effects, vulgarly called "miracles." The Roman Church, with propriety, holds these results to be evidences of superior psychic development, and, with her usual sagacity, canonizes such persons for the edification of the faithful. Saint Augustine and Saint John of the Cross are two excellent examples. But, as well as I can judge from information accessible to me, the evolution of such great souls, saints or mahatmas, is more frequent among the dark-skinned natives of Asia than among the white races of Western countries. — C.]

foot of a nuga-tree. After that his strength returned to him. He arose, took his alms-bowl, bathed in the River Niranjara, ate the food, and went into the jungle.

47. *Q. What did he there?*

A. Having formed his determination after these reflections, he went at evening to the Bôdhi or Asvattha tree.

48. *Q. What did he do there?*

A. He determined not to leave the spot until he attained the Buddhaship.

49. *Q. At which side of the tree did he seat himself?*

A. The side facing the east.[1]

50. *Q. What did he obtain that night?*

A. The knowledge of his previous births, of the causes of re-birth, and of the way to extinguish desires. Just before the break of the next day his mind was entirely opened, like the full-blown lotus-flower; the light of supreme knowledge, or

[1] No reason is given in the canonical books for the choice of this side of the tree, though an explanation is to be found in the popular legends upon which the books of Bishop Bigandet and other European commentators are based. Translated into the simpler garb of scientific language, it might be thus rendered: There are always certain influences coming upon us from the different quarters of the sky. Sometimes the influence from one quarter will be best, sometimes that from another quarter. This time the influence from the east was best, as he sat at the western side so as to face the east.

the Four Truths, poured in upon him; he had become Buddha — the Enlightened, the All-knowing.

51. *Q. Had he at last discovered the cause of human misery?*

A. At last he had. As the light of the morning sun chases away the darkness of night, and reveals to sight the trees, fields, rocks, seas, rivers, animals, men, and all things, so the full light of knowledge rose in his mind, and he saw at one glance the causes of human suffering and the way to escape from them.

52. *Q. Had he great struggles before gaining this perfect wisdom?*

A. Yes; mighty and terrible struggles. He had to conquer in his body all those natural defects and human appetites and desires that prevent our seeing the truth. He had to overcome all the bad influences of the sinful world around him. Like a soldier fighting desperately in battle against many enemies, he struggled. Like a hero who conquers, he gained his object; and the secret of human misery was discovered.

53. *Q. Can you tell me in one word what is that secret?*

A. Ignorance.[1]

[1 In what ignorance most people live and die can be imagined only by one who has discovered his own. Ignorance, root of all evil, whose fruit is all sin, — sin which cometh not by the Law, but in ignorance thereof, and breedeth fear, and so maketh of man a slave, — a slave of him whom knowledge else had made a master, a God! For as the Soul

54. *Q. Can you tell me the remedy?*

A. To dispel ignorance and become wise.

55. *Q. Why does ignorance cause suffering?*

A. Because it makes us prize what is not worth prizing, grieve for that we should not grieve for, consider real what is not real but only illusory, and pass our lives in the pursuit of worthless objects, neglecting what is in reality most valuable.

56. *Q. And what is that which is most valuable?*

A. To know the whole secret of man's existence and destiny, so that we may estimate at no more than their actual value this life and its relations; so that we may live in a way to insure the greatest happiness and the least suffering for our fellow-men and ourselves.[1]

completeth passively the circuit of Ezekiel's wheel, while the Spirit contendeth actively with Matter for its possession, there standeth the triune Man in darkness, and through ignorance comprehendeth not the light; else had the Soul, in knowledge of the issues of evil, already sought the Spirit and put on deathless wisdom. — C.]

[1 "Know also that no man ever did, or ever can, without careful preparation and peculiar fitness therefor, together with the knowledge of the mode, code, and ritual which obtains, gain entrance to the presence of the Gods. This knowledge is only given to the pure in heart and life, whose fitness is proven by long and severe trials. So think not to spring full-fledged into our wisdom. Seek first rather to control the issues of evil within yourself. There is no greater evil for a man than that which he can find within himself a rule to measure. Nor can he reach

57. *Q. What is the light that can dispel this ignorance of ours, and remove all sorrows?*

A. The knowledge of the "Four Noble Truths," as Buddha called them.

58. *Q. Name these Four Noble Truths.*

A. 1. The miseries of existence.[1]

2. The cause productive of misery, which is the desire, ever renewed, of satisfying one's self, without being able ever to secure that end.[2]

any higher state of life and goodness than that which rules his daily walk." *Anon.* — C.]

[1 "First of the 'noble truths,' — how sorrow is
Shadow to life, moving where life doth move,
Not to be laid aside until one lays
Living aside, with all its changing states,
Birth, growth, decay, love, hatred, pleasure, pain,
Being and doing; how that none strips off
These sad delights and pleasant griefs who lacks
Knowledge to know them snares." — *Arnold.*]

[2 Since all desires of the body, all affections of the senses, grow with what they feed upon, and since the gratification of the bodily senses is at the expense of the transitory and perishable body itself, it follows that the pursuit of pleasure necessarily defeats its own end, by the destruction of the only means to that end. Increase of desire with decrease of the means of its gratification is the terrible law of the bodily affections; whence the impossibility of satisfying one's self, the folly of the attempt to do so, and the undesirability of all earthly desires. "But those things

3. The destruction of that desire, or the estranging of one's self from it.[1]

4. The means of obtaining this destruction of desire.

59. *Q. Tell me some things that cause sorrow ?* [2]

A. Birth, growth, decay, illness, death, separation from objects we love, hating what cannot be avoided, craving for what cannot be obtained.

which are not seen [*i. e.* not affections of the bodily senses] are eternal;" the soul which sets store by such is withdrawn from the physical to the spiritual life, and risks no desires whose gratification by the spirit is not endless and infinite. — C.]

[1 It is a common delusion, that the destruction of desire is accomplished by gratification of the desire or by securing the object of desire; as when hunger is satisfied by eating, the appetite for food is destroyed. This is fallacious; all appetites are re-born, not destroyed, in satisfying them. Food is but fuel to the fire of the body, enabling the body to demand more food. No appetite is destroyed until the power of regenerating it from its gratification is gone. Shiva, the destroyer, is also the re-creator. Therefore the destruction of desire is not in its gratification, which re-creates by satisfying it, but the "estranging of one's self from it." See Question 61. — C.]

[2 Any orthodox Christian catechism would here present a very different answer to such a question, giving a list of evil passions and wrong tendencies under the name of "sins," classified as "deadly," "venial," etc., much as offences against human laws might be graded. The Buddhistic seems much more radical, natural, and consonant with the facts of human existence. Categorical sins and crimes are mere offshoots from the main trunk of the misery, and therefore the undesirability, of the

60. *Q. Are these individual peculiarities?*

A. Yes, and they differ with each individual; but all men have them in degree, and suffer from them.

61. *Q. How can we escape the sufferings which result from unsatisfied desires and ignorant cravings?*

A. By complete conquest over, and destruction of, this eager thirst for life and its pleasures, which cause sorrow.[1]

contact of matter with spirit, by which association the trembling soul is put in an uncertain balance between forces which tend to its destruction and those which tend to its conservation. Yet in such conflict is ignorance dispelled, and the knowledge of good and evil attained. The most deadly — in a sense, the "unpardonable" — sin is not ordinarily enumerated. It subsists in the soul's deliberate choice of evil instead of good, after it has acquired knowledge of both. — C.]

[1 Again deeper, clearer, and stronger than the reasons we usually hear for the cultivation of virtue and the practice of morality. Esoteric philosophy may usually be relied upon to ring clearer than exoteric religion. Says Socrates on this subject: "And is not purification the very thing of which we spoke before, — the separating, as far as possible, the soul from the body, and the accustoming it to gather itself together out of every quarter, apart from the body, and to reunite itself, and to dwell, so far as it is able, both now and hereafter, freed from the shackles of the body?" (*Phædo.*) Hear also Plotinus: "Purify your soul from all undue hope and fear about earthly things, mortify the body, deny self, — affections as well as appetites; and the inner eye will begin to exercise its clear and solemn vision" (*Epistle to Flaccus*). Ignorance of what a human being really is, on the part of most religionists of the Western churches, and ignoring of that which he chiefly is, on the part of most materialistic

62. *Q. How may we gain such a conquest?*

A. By following in the Noble Eightfold Path which Buddha discovered and pointed out.

63. *Q. What is this Noble Eightfold Path?*

A. The eight parts of this Path are called *angas*. They are, — 1. Right Belief; 2. Right Thought; 3. Right Speech; 4. Right Doctrine; 5. Right Means of Livelihood; 6. Right Endeavor; 7. Right Memory; 8. Right Meditation. The man who keeps these *angas* in mind and follows them will be free from sorrow and may reach salvation.

64. *Q. Salvation from what?*

A. Salvation from the miseries of existence and of re-births, all of which are due to ignorance and impure lusts and cravings.[1]

scientists of the present day, conspire to produce in the former the credulousness of superstition, and in the latter the superstitions of incredulity, better known as "rational agnosticism." — C.]

[1 Children, both grown and ungrown, are differently taught in Christian countries. For a cruel example, —

"*Q. Will Christ come again?*

"*A.* Christ will come down from heaven at the last day to judge all men.

"*Q. What are the things Christ will judge?*

"*A.* Christ will judge at the last day all our thoughts, words, works, and omissions.

"*Q. What will Christ say to the wicked?*

65. *Q. And when this salvation is attained, what do we reach?*

A. Nirvána.

66. *Q. What is Nirvána?*

A. A condition of total cessation of changes; of perfect rest; of the absence of desire, and illusion, and sorrow; of the total obliteration of everything that goes to make up the physical man. Before reaching Nirvána man is constantly being re-born; when he reaches Nirvána he is re-born no more.[1]

"*A.* On the judgment day Christ will say to the wicked, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.'" — *Archbishop Spalding's Roman Catholic Catechism*, p. 19.

The revolt of the soul which has attained self-knowledge, against any such monstrous untruth, is prompt, decisive, and final. The appeal of such souls from self-sufficient authority to the facts of Nature and Natural Law — an appeal for which modern science has prepared the way — may yet develop the individual rebellions of such souls into an organized and effectual spiritual revolution. — C.]

[1 Nothing seems more incredible to an orthodox Christian, of any Protestant sect or of more Catholic creed, and nothing can be more repugnant to most Western minds, than the idea of re-birth, re-incarnation, metempsychosis, or "transmigration of soul" in any way. But on this point the Western world is for the most part as far from understanding the Oriental conception as it is in mistaking Nirvána for "annihilation." See the author's own remarks, beyond. This is no place to go far into such deep questions; but I may say that much of the Western misconception is due to ignorance of the difference between the "spirit" and

67. *Q. What causes us to be re-born?*

A. The unsatisfied desire for things that belong to the state of personal existence in the material world. This unquenched thirst for physical existence is a force, and has a creative power in itself so strong that it draws the being back into mundane life.

the "soul" of a human being, and between his individuality and his personality at any given period. These two are only temporarily co-incident and conjoined. The physical personality is very fugitive, its duration averaging only about thirty-five years. Individuality may be protracted for a much greater or an indefinite period, its character and condition and the personality it eventually acquires being determined according to the law of Karma in a next "world of effects," where are experienced the results of the life in this present phenomenal "world of causes." But the soul, as a thing having *form*, as the "spiritual *body*," sooner or later perishes, like the physical body. Only the spirit is imperishable, being co-eternal with God, and formless like Him. A spirit in a state of conscious formlessness, subject to no further modification by embodiment, yet in full knowledge of its experiences, is Nirvánic.

To the above statement of the non-acceptance by Western minds of the idea of re-incarnation must be excepted the school of the French Spiritists, to which the teachings of "Allan Kardec" have given a stability and coherency which contrast favorably with the present unorganized and almost chaotic state of American Spiritualism. One of the most striking differences between the orthodox French *Spiritiste* and the usual American Spiritualist is this very point. It is to be hoped that the progress of psychic research may throw needed light upon this and many other matters of vital interest to humanity. Neither the Christian church nor the science of the day has done so in a way

68. *Q. Are our re-births in any way affected by the nature of our unsatisfied desires?*

A. Yes; and by our individual merits or demerits.[1]

69. *Q. Does our merit or our demerit control the state, condition, or form in which we shall be re-born?*

A. It does. The broad rule is, that if we have an excess of merit, we shall be well and happily born the next time; if an excess of demerit, our next birth will be wretched and full of suffering.

70. *Q. Is this Buddhistic doctrine supported or denied by the teachings of modern science?*

A. It is in reconciliation with science, since it is the doctrine of cause and effect. Science teaches that man is the

satisfactory to the tendencies of current thought. On the whole, it may be said that, in the West, French Spiritism is most progressive, most enlightened, and most in accord with ideas that have for many thousand years ruled a majority of the human race; that American Spiritualism is next most so; that both these systems avail themselves of many important facts and demonstrable phenomena which orthodox religions decry or deny, and which orthodox science scouts and ignores. Religious as well as scientific extremists may yet find a better than either of their respective ways. — C.]

[1 "The *Karma*, — all that total of a soul
Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,
The 'self' it wove, with woof of viewless time,
Crossed on the warp invisible of acts." — *Arnold.*]

result of a law of development from an imperfect and lower to a higher and more perfect condition.

71. *Q. What is this doctrine of science called?*

A. Evolution.[1] It is sometimes called "Darwinism."

72. *Q. Can you show any further indorsement of Buddhism by science?*

A. Buddha's doctrine teaches that there were many progenitors of the human race; also, that there is a principle of differentiation among men, certain individuals having a greater capacity for the rapid attainment of wisdom, and arrival at Nirvána, than others. Of Bódhisats there are three kinds —

73. *Q. Stop: what is a Bódhisat?*

A. A being who has outstripped other men in moral development, and who in some future birth is sure to appear upon earth as a Buddha. He will thus appear because his pity for

[1 A sagacious hint of the author's, looking to the establishment of a "Darwinian psychology," if the term be admissible; that is to say, to the secure founding of a psychic science by the application of the principles of evolution to the soul as well as to the body — to the finer as well as to the grosser elements which constitute a human being. Should Orient and Occident clasp hands in such meet human work, most precious truths, proclaimed by the avatars of the Supreme Spirit from all eternity, cherished in the bosoms of the "chosen noble few" of every age and of every creed, may yet flash out to dissipate the darkness of religious and scientific superstitions. — C.]

human ignorance is so deep, and his benevolent desire to teach mankind the cause of sorrow and the means of escape is so strong, that he voluntarily re-incarnates himself in many births, until at last he has become pure enough to attain the Buddhahood. Having reached that state, and preached the law, he only then consents to pass out of the cycle of births into the perfect release of Paranirvána.

74. *Q. Proceed. What are these three kinds of Bódhisats called?*

A. Panyâdika, or Udghatitagnya, "he who attains quickly;" Saddhadhika, or Vipachitagnya, "he who attains less quickly;" and Wiriadhika, or Gneyya, "he who attains least quickly."

75. *Q. Well, will you proceed?*

A. Just so modern science teaches that out of the millions of beings that appear upon earth some reach perfection most quickly, some less quickly, and others least quickly. Buddhists say that the nature of the re-birth is controlled by the Karma — the preponderance of merit or demerit — of the previous existence. Scientific men say the new form is partly the result of influences from "conditions of environment" that surrounded the previous generation. There is thus an agreement between Buddhism and science as to the root-idea.

76. *Q. And therefore, do not both Buddhism and Darwinism teach that all beings are alike subject to universal law?*

A. Both do so teach.

77. *Q. Then may every man become a Buddha?*

A. It is not in the nature of every man to become a Buddha, for a Buddha is developed only at long intervals of time, and, seemingly, only when the state of humanity absolutely requires such a teacher to show it the forgotten path to Nirvána. But every being may equally reach Nirvána by conquering ignorance[1] and gaining wisdom.

[1 "Ignorance" is a term of more comprehensive signification in Oriental than in our usages, extending to moral as well as intellectual nescience. Thus Patánjali ("Yoga," Book ii. Aph. 5) defines it as the notion that the temporal, the impure, the evil, and what is not soul, are severally eternal, pure, good, and soul. Bhojarajah's Commentary amplifies this aphorism, declaring ignorance in general to be the notion that what is *not* this, *is* this. The notion that there is eternalness in what is uneternal, as a water-jar, is called ignorance. So too is the notion that things impure, as the body, are pure; that objects which are evil are joys; that the body, which is not the soul, is the soul, — as when a bumpkin fancies that his eye sees, or a physiologist has a notion that his brain thinks. The Commentary concludes by saying that "this explains the mistake of vice for virtue, and of the useless for the useful." Chatterji has some measured and seasonable words upon this topic: —

"Ignorance is painful; and it is immaterial whether our ignorance begets an overestimate of the importance of life, or the opposite. The great delusion of an absolute existence outside of Cosmos produces a perfect paralysis of the present life, and all the misery consequent thereupon; while the overestimate of this life ends in sensuality and bigotry. This overestimate proceeds from two causes, both equally dangerous, —

78. *Q. Does Buddhism teach that man is re-born only upon our Earth?*

A. No. We are taught that the inhabited worlds are numberless; the world upon which a person is to have his next birth, as well as the nature of the re-birth itself, being decided by the preponderance of the individual's merit or demerit. In other words, it will be controlled by his attractions, as science would describe it.

79. *Q. Are there worlds more perfect and developed, and others less so, than our Earth?*

A. Buddhism teaches this; and also that the inhabitants of each world correspond in development with itself.

80. *Q. Has not the Buddha summed up his whole religion in one "sutta," or verse?*

A. Yes.

81. *Q. Will you repeat it?*

corporealism [*i.e.* "materialism," as commonly understood, the "rational agnosticism" of scientific orthodoxy], which cannot conceive of any existence dissociated from the present body, and certain forms of dogmatic religion [*i.e.* "revealed" ecclesiasticism, in its endless guises], which supplement this erring, miserable life of humanity by an eternity of existence taking its color from causes generated in finite time. The pleasures of this life appear in gigantic proportions to the votary of the former system, and dogmatic morality becomes the omnipotent ruler of the so-called religious man." — C.]

A. Sabbapápassa akaranam ;
Kusalassa upasampadá ;
Sa chitta pariyo dapanam, —
Etam Buddhánu sáranaṃ.[1]

82. *Q. Do these precepts show that Buddhism is an active, or a passive religion?*

A. To "cease from sin" may be called a passive quality; but to "get virtue" and to "cleanse one's own heart" are altogether active qualities. Buddha taught that we should not merely not be evil, but that we should be positively good.

83. *Q. Who or what are the "Three Guides"*[2] *that a Buddhist is supposed to follow?*

[1] "To cease from all sin;
To get virtue ;
To cleanse one's own heart, —
This is the religion of the Buddhas."

This celebrated verse has a meaning that should not be overlooked by the student of Buddhistic philosophy. The first line embodies the whole spirit of the *Vinaya ;* the second line that of the *Sutta ;* the third that of the *Abidhamma.* Thus in three lines, collectively comprising only eight Pali words, are condensed the entire essence of the Buddhist scriptures. According to Mr. Rhys-Davids, there are about 1,752,800 words in the whole text of the three *Pitakas.*

[2] *Sáranaṃ.* Wijesinha Mudaliyar writes me, — "This word has been hitherto very inappropriately and erroneously rendered 'refuge' by European Pali scholars, and thoughtlessly so accepted by native Pali scholars. Neither Pali etymology nor Buddhistic philosophy justifies the

A. They are disclosed in the formula called the *Tisáraṇa*, —"I follow Buddha as my guide; I follow the law as my guide; I follow the order as my guide."

84. *Q. What does he mean when repeating this formula?*

A. He means that he regards the Lord Buddha as his all-wise teacher and exemplar; the law, or doctrine, as containing the essential and immutable principles of justice and truth, and thus being the path that leads to the *summum bonum;* and the order as the teachers and expounders of that excellent law revealed by Buddha.

translation. 'Refuge,' in the sense of 'a fleeing back' or 'a place of shelter,' is quite foreign to true Buddhism, which insists that every man shall work out his own emancipation. The root *Sri* in Sanskrit (*Sára* in Pali) means 'to move,' 'to go;' so that *Sáraṇaṃ* would denote a moving, or he or that which goes before or with another — a 'guide,' or 'helper.' I construe the passage thus: *Gacchami*, I go, *Buddhaṃ*, to Buddha, *Sáraṇaṃ*, as my guide. The translation of the *Tisáraṇa* as the 'three refuges' has given rise to much misapprehension, and has been made by Anti-Buddhists a fertile pretext for taunting Buddhists with the absurdity of taking refuge in nonentities and believing in unrealities. The term 'refuge' is more applicable to Nirvána, of which *Sáraṇaṃ* is a synonym." The High Priest calls my attention to the fact that the Pali root *Sára* has also the secondary meaning of "killing him" or "that which destroys." *Buddhaṃ Sáraṇaṃ gacchami* might thus be rendered: "I go to Buddha, the law, and the order, as the destroyers of my fears, — the first by his preaching, the second by its axiomatic truth, the third by their virtuous example and precepts."

85. *Q. But are not many of the members of this "order" men intellectually and morally inferior to ourselves?*

A. Yes; but we are taught by Buddha that only those who diligently attend to the precepts, discipline their minds, and strive to attain, or have attained, to one of the eight stages of holiness and perfection, constitute his "order." It is expressly stated that the order referred to in the *Tisáraṇa* is that of the *Aṭṭha Ariya Puggala*, — ascetics who have attained to one of the eight stages of perfection.

86. *Q. What are the five observances or Precepts, called the* "Panca sîla," *imposed on the Buddhist laity in general?* [1]

[1 Questions 86 to 91. — In the general tenor of these "precepts" we observe, — (*a*) A moral code or system of practical ethics in no wise peculiar in its principles or practices: these being a part of common humanities. (*b*) Additional injunctions upon the clergy, as customary in all countries: these being on the whole most consonant with the rules for the government of Catholic priests, except in the important particular that obedience to ecclesiastical authority is not specified; for submission to hierarchical rule is foreign to the humane and catholic spirit of the "Protestants of India." Continence, poverty, asceticism, and some degree of seclusion from the world are the principal points, aside from those binding upon all men alike; a good Carmelite monk would observe them all. (*c*) Sundry things which may strike us as trivial or superfluous, but which are simply of the *genius loci*, — matters of race and place, — and no stranger than the language, complexion, or costume of an Oriental seems to us. The really most remarkable prohibition is "the practice of certain specified arts and sciences," — the deep significance of which most

A. They are included in the following formula, which Buddhists repeat publicly at the *vihâras* (temples) : —

(1) I observe the precept to refrain from destroying the life of beings.

(2) I observe the precept to refrain from stealing.

(3) I observe the precept to abstain from unlawful sexual intercourse.

(4) I observe the precept to refrain from falsehood.

(5) I observe the precept to abstain from using intoxicating liquors, and drugs that tend to procrastination.

Occidentals, whether lay or clerical, would be apt to miss, though any Catholic priest who understands his business, or a layman of any creed who has experimented in psychic science, should know very well what is meant. Let it here remain, however, *in abscondito.* (*d*) Comparison with the famous Ten Commandments of the Jewish Scriptures shows, — entire agreement upon the prime ethical points of murder, theft, falsehood, and adultery; additional injunctions against gluttony, intemperance, frivolity, and needless luxury for all persons, and for the clergy these and slander, scandal, idle talk, traffic, and violence of any kind; covetousness not expressly, though by implication, forbidden; no particular day set apart from the rest, though "seven" is specially mystic and sacred in the East; no recognition of the scientific fact that by the law of heredity children take after their parents, for better or worse; nothing specific against idolatry (but see Question 124); and, finally (what is particularly commendable, I think), no pretence of any such miracle as that which the Sinaitic thunder is supposed to have revealed, — an incredible if not an impossible "I Am," whose first words were pompous, dictatorial, and

87. *Q. What benefits does a Buddhist derive by the observance of these precepts?*

A. He is said to acquire more or less merit according to the manner and time of observing the precepts, and the number observed. That is, if he observes only one precept, violating the other four, he acquires the merit of the observance of that precept only; and the longer he keeps that precept the greater will be the merit. He who keeps all the precepts inviolate will cause himself to have a higher and happier existence hereafter.

88. *Q. Are there any other observances which it is considered meritorious for the laity voluntarily to undertake to keep?*

A. Yes; the *Aṭṭhanga Sîla*, or the Eightfold Precept, which embraces the five above enumerated, with three additional; namely, —

(6) I observe the precept to abstain from eating at unseasonable times.[1]

egotistic. The reverence of the human soul for the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Infinite; the awe which the mind of man may feel at the very thought of the ineffable name of the Most High; the humility of the creature in his heart before an immanent Creation, — it is such substantial spiritual prerogatives as these that give to man his divine right to sit in judgment upon all the Gods of men's invention. — C.]

[1] An "unseasonable time" is after the sun has passed the meridian. Buddha was wise enough to know that his "mendicants" could think deeper and be healthier by resting the digestive organs half of each day.

(7) I observe the precept to abstain from dancing, singing, and unbecoming shows.

(8) I observe the precept to abstain from using garlands, scents, perfumes, cosmetics, ointments, and ornaments.

To the above are added two others to form the *Dasa Sîla*, or the Tenfold Obligation of a priest; namely, —

(9) I observe the precept to abstain from using high and broad beds.

(10) I observe the precept to abstain from receiving gold or silver.

The *Dasa Sîla* is binding on all priests and *Samaneras*, or novitiates, but optional with lay devotees.

89. *Q. Are there separate rules and precepts for the guidance and discipline of the order?*

A. Yes, there are many, but all come under the following four heads: —

(1) Principal disciplinary rules (*Pâtimokkha saṃvara sîla*).

(2) Observances for the repression of the senses (*Indriya saṃvara sîla*).

(3) Regulations for justly procuring and using food, clothing, etc. (*Paccayasannissita sîla*).

(4) Directions for leading an unblemished life (*Ajivapârisuddha sîla*).

90. *Q. Will you enumerate some crimes and offences that priests are particularly prohibited from committing?*

A. The priests ought to abstain from, — destroying the life of beings; stealing; sexual intercourse; falsehood; the use of intoxicating liquors, and eating at unseasonable times; dancing, singing, and unbecoming shows; using garlands, scents, perfumes, etc.; using high and broad beds; receiving presents of gold, silver, raw grain and meat, women and maidens, slaves, cattle, elephants, etc.; defaming; using harsh and reproachful language; idle talk; reading and hearing fabulous stories and tales; carrying messages to and from laymen; buying and selling; cheating, bribing, deception, and fraud; imprisoning, plundering, and threatening others; and the practice of certain specified arts and sciences, etc.

91. *Q. What are the duties of priests to the laity?*

A. Generally, to set them an example of the highest morality; to teach and instruct them; to preach and expound the law; to recite the *Paritta* (comforting texts) to the sick, and publicly in times of general calamity, when requested to do so; and to exhort the people to virtuous actions.

92. *Q. How would a Buddhist describe true merit?*

A. There is no great merit in any outward act; salvation depends upon the inward motive that determines the deed.

93. *Q. Will you give an example?*

A. A rich man may expend lakhs of rupees in building *dágobas* or *vihâras*, in erecting statues of Buddha, in festivals and processions, in feeding priests, in giving alms to the poor, or in digging tanks or constructing rest-houses by the roadside for travellers, and yet have comparatively little merit, if all this is done for the mere sake of display and to make himself praised by men, or from any other selfish motive.[1] But he who, whether rich or poor, does the least of these things with kind motive, or

[1 The quality of every human action subsists in the *motive*, — in so far as the doer is concerned, — not in the intention, as commonly said; and its effect upon himself, for better or worse, may be exactly the reverse of the consequences resulting to any other person. Motive, or incentive, is to be wholly distinguished from intention, or purpose: one is primary, absolute; the other, relative, conditioned. I may be moved by the most ignoble selfishness when I intend to do good to another; what is the most noble altruism as to its effect, may be rooted in the rottenness of egoism. Yet whatever good is done another, *is* done and *is* good, no matter what its "reflex action" upon the doer; the latter effect turning upon both motive and intention, and not at all upon the result. So also when any wrong is done another, that one is necessarily wronged, whether the doer intended it or not, and whatever his motive. That most subtile and pernicious sophistry which pretends to excuse, if not to justify, "doing evil that good may come," lurks in an obscurity of the distinction between motive and intention. It is exposed by formulating the statement, "I am moved to do good, but I intend to do evil; so I will borrow the livery of the Devil in which to serve the Lord," — a confession good for the soul, inasmuch as it is free from any suspicion of hypocrisy. — C.]

from a warm love for his fellow-men, gains great merit. A good deed done with a bad motive benefits others, but not him who does it. And one who approves of a good deed done by another shares in the merit, if his sympathy is real, not pretended.

94. *Q. In what books is written all the most excellent wisdom of Buddha's teachings?*

A. In the three collections of books called *Tripitikas*

95. *Q. What are the names of the three "Pitakas," or groups of books?*

A. The *Vinaya Pitaka*, the *Sutta Pitaka*, and the *Abidhamma Pitaka.*

96. *Q. What do they respectively contain?*

A. The first contains rules of discipline for the government of the priests; the second contains instructive discourses for the laity; the third explains the metaphysics [1] of Buddhism.

[1 Where I should have preferred to say "idealism," or "subjectivity;" but it is futile to quarrel with the word. "The truth, nevertheless, remains constant, that there will be always something unknown with which metaphysics will concern itself, and which ethics will demand to have brought within the grasp of physics, — the science of objectivity. There dominates throughout the whole range of existence the eternal struggle of converting metaphysics into physics; and ethics is the power that fights. Any scheme of life or happiness that neglects one and enthrones the other of these will always defeat its own ends. Physics

97. *Q. Do Buddhists believe these books to be inspired, in the sense that Christians believe their Bible to be?*

A. No; but they revere them as containing all the parts of that Most Excellent Law, by the knowing of which man may save himself.[1]

98. *Q. Do Buddhists consider Buddha as one who by his own virtue can save us from the consequences of our individual sins?*

A. Not at all. No man can be saved by another; he must save himself.

99. *Q. What, then, was Buddha to us and all other beings?*

without metaphysics is empiricism; metaphysics without physics is dogmatism; and ethics alone is superstition. The harmonious combination of these three elements forms what is called Theosophy, — the wisdom-religion, or esoteric science." *Chatterji.* — C.]

[1 Questions 97, 98. — Irreconcilable, of course, with any tone or complexion of Occidental ecclesiasticism, two corner-stones of which hierarchical fabric are "plenary inspiration" and "vicarious atonement," — notions far more difficult either to apologize for or explain away than is a Christian's idea of his Trinity, which stands securely upon the "Pagan" twin pedestals of Sabæism and Phallicism, or the symbolism of certain astronomical and physiological facts. No devotee of Jewish tradition or Christian fetichism can be helped out of his difficulties here. Let the courage of his convictions carry him on to the point where he can say, with that brilliant and impetuous Mystic, Saint Augustine, *Credo quia absurdum;* and then let him turn, refreshed, to Eliphas Levi's "Paradoxes of the Highest Science." — C.]

A. An all-seeing, all-wise counsellor; one who discovered the safe path and pointed it out; one who showed the cause of, and the only cure for, human suffering. In pointing to the road, in showing us how to escape dangers, he became our Guide. And as one leading a blind man across a narrow bridge over a swift and deep stream saves his life, so in showing us, who were blind from ignorance, the way to salvation, Buddha may well be called our "Savior."

100. *Q. If you were to try to represent the whole spirit of Buddha's doctrine by one word, what word would you choose?*

A. JUSTICE.[1]

101. *Q. Why?*

A. Because it teaches that every man gets, under the operations of universal Law, exactly that reward or punishment which he has deserved; no more, and no less. No good deed or

[1 Two different words may well have been expected here by one or another thoughtful reader. The first of these is *Mercy*. But no superhuman being has ever been known to exhibit that quality to the extent of deflecting, by a hair's breadth, the Nemesic sequence called cause and effect, either on the psychic or the physical side of Nature's shield. The other is *Renunciation*. But those who catch the true spirit of the identical teachings of Buddha and of Jesus know that eternal Justice overrules here also. For whoso renounceth the world, the flesh, and the devil, hath his just reward; yea, whoso renounceth himself findeth himself at one with his own just God. — C.]

bad deed, however trifling, and however secretly committed, escapes the evenly balanced scales of Karma.[1]

102. *Q. Were all these points of doctrine that you have explained, meditated upon by Buddha near the Bô tree?*

[1 "The Law of Karma is the true order of our personal experiences as seen in the light of that mode of Nature's manifestation commonly called 'causation.' That which is, cannot cease to be; but it cannot remain in a state of permanence, for that would be contradictory to the idea of succession [*continuity*], which is inseparably connected with existence. Our acts, therefore, live in their effects or subsequent forms. Until we can remove all material desires from our acts, they will always necessitate material effects and produce re-incarnations. . . . Attention is to be drawn to the fact that this law offers a satisfactory explanation of the apparent injustices of life. We find around us not only pain and suffering, but also moral excellence and depravity, forced upon individuals by circumstances over which they seem to have no control. No amount of speculation or dogmatism will furnish a clue to this anomaly so long as the Karmic Law remains unrecognized. Exception is taken to this Law on the ground that it is repugnant to justice that a man should experience the consequences of a prior act without preserving the memory of that act. It is hardly necessary to point out that this line of argument is based upon the assumption that the word *justice*, as applied to the working of natural laws, has the same meaning as the justice demanded by us in intercourse between man and man, with their limited knowledge and selfish motives. The justice of Nature is vindicated by the undisturbed sway of the law of causation. If *you* suffer, there must be a reason for it; and that reason must have some connection with *you*, otherwise it could not have produced *your* suffering. It should not, however, be supposed that the cause of suffering is here sought to be connected with the present

A. Yes; these and many more that may be read in the Buddhist Scriptures. The entire system of Buddhism came to his mind during the Great Meditation.

103. *Q. How long did Buddha remain near the Bô tree?*

A. Forty-nine days.

104. *Q. What did he then do?*

A. He went to the tree called Ajapála, where he decided, after meditation, to teach his law to all, without distinction of sex, caste, or race.

105. *Q. To whom did he first preach the doctrine?*

A. To the five companions, or disciples, who had abandoned him when he broke his severe fast.

106. *Q. Where did he find them?*

A. At Isipatana, near Benares.

107. *Q. Did they readily listen to him?*

A. They meant not to do so. However, so great was the beauty of his appearance and the power of his influence, that all five were forced to pay the closest attention to his preaching.

108. *Q. What is this discourse of Buddha called?*

form of *you*, — *your personality*, the aggregate unity of a certain bundle of experiences; that personality being in fact but the form which your old self has assumed under self-generated causes, which are the progenitors of your present suffering or enjoyment. 'Ye suffer from yourselves;' 'That which ye sow, ye reap.'" *Chatterji.* — C.]

A. The *Dhammacakka ppavattana Sutta*, — the *Sutra* of the Definition of the Rule of Doctrine.[1]

109. *Q. What effect had the discourse upon the five companions?*

A. The aged Kondanya was first to enter the path leading to Arahatship; afterwards the other four.

110. *Q. Who were the next converts?*

A. A rich young layman, named Yasa, and his father. By the end of five months the disciples numbered sixty persons.

111. *Q. What did Buddha at that time do?*

A. He called together his disciples and sent them in various and opposite directions to preach. He himself went to a town called Senani, which was near Uruwela.

112. *Q. Are there many Buddhists at present throughout the world?*

[1] Since the appearance of the first edition I have received from one of the ablest English-Pali scholars of Ceylon, L. Corneille Wijesinha, Esq., Mudaliyar of Matale, what seems a better rendering of *Dhammacakka ppavattana* than the one previously given. He makes it "the Establishment of the Reign of Law." Mr. Rhys-Davids prefers "the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness." Mr. Wijesinha writes me, "You may use 'Kingdom of Righteousness' too, but it savors more of dogmatic theology than of philosophic ethics. *Dhammackka ppavattana suttam* is the discourse entitled 'the Establishment of the Reign of Law.'" Sumangala, who gave me the definition in the text, assents to Mr. Wijesinha's rendering.

A. There are more Buddhists than any other class of religionists.

113. *Q. How many people are there supposed to be living on the earth?*

A. About thirteen hundred millions.

114. *Q. Of these how many are Buddhists?*

A. About five hundred millions.[1]

115. *Q. You say that after Buddha had been preaching five months, his followers numbered only sixty in all?*

A. He had that many disciples only.

116. *Q. After becoming Buddha, how long did he teach his doctrine on earth?*

A. Forty-five years. During this time he made a vast number of converts among all classes, — among rajahs and coolies, the rich and the poor, the mighty and the humble. And among his followers were also some of the most learned men of his day.

117. *Q. What became of his former wife and his son Rahula?*

A. First Rahula, and later Yasôdhara, gave up the world and became followers of his doctrine.

[1 Among the statistics on this score before me is an estimate — attributed to Max Müller — of some years ago, reckoning nominal Buddhists at four hundred and fifty millions, and nominal Christians at two hundred and sixty millions. — C.]

118. *Q. What became of his father, the King?*

A. He accepted the true doctrine also.

119. *Q. Throughout his career was it Buddha's habit to travel about the country?*

A. During the eight dry months of the year he went from city to city, and from province to province, teaching and preaching to the people. During the four rainy months he would remain in one place, giving special instructions to his declared followers.

120. *Q. Do Buddhist priests still imitate this custom?*

A. Yes, many do.

121. *Q. Of Buddha's own disciples, who were his favorites?*

A. Sáriputra and Moggallána.

122. *Q. How do Buddhist priests differ from the priests of other religions?*

A. In other religions the priests claim to be intercessors [1]

[1 Of logical necessity, in the interests of the "apostolic succession," going back through a series of pontiffs ("bridge-builders" between God and man) to a "keeper of the keys" of heaven, and so to the theological character of the "mediator" or "redeemer" or "savior" with which most Western churches have invested Jesus, — a matter somewhat mitigated in the Anglican Church by reducing a pontificate to an episcopacy, or "overseeing," of the affair, and still further diluted in many other sects to a pastorate, or "sheep-folding," on the part of a clergyman or *clericus*; *i. e.* an individual learned enough to read and write, as distinguished from any lamb who knew less. — C.]

between men and God, to help to obtain pardon of sins; the Buddhist priests do not acknowledge or expect anything from a divine power, but they seek to govern their lives according to the doctrine of Buddha and teach the true path to others. A Personal God Buddhists regard as only a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men.[1]

[1 Philosophic atheism is not to be misunderstood for what "the fool hath said in his *heart*" (*manas*), and is confounded with godlessness only by the ignorant, the knavish, and the priest-ridden. God is a religious, emotional, or ideal necessity; really, naturally, rationally a nonentity. It being logically impossible for the Infinite Absolute to be anything that the Finite Conditioned can conceive, no personal God that man ever invented can be conceived to be, except in human imagination. Every true psychist, mystic, occultist, or spiritual Magus differs *toto cælo* from any possible priest or pastor of exoteric ecclesiasticism, in that the former makes his own God with whom to identify himself, while the latter keeps at least three ready-made infinite and absolute Gods to be furnished on demand, — thus preserving the custom of every great "heathen" trinidolatry, of every exoteric hierarchy. "Not to learn man from God, then, as did our forefathers, but to learn God from man, is the task before us." "God made man in his own image," it is said; and, to do the Creator's handiwork justice, let it be added, man has had the grace to return the compliment.

"The primitive doctrine that God created man in his own image, male and female, and consequently that the divine comprised the two sexes within itself, fulfils all the conditions requisite to constitute a Catholic theological dogma; inasmuch as it may be truly affirmed of it that it has been held *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*, being as universal as the

123. *Q. Do they accept the theory of everything having been formed out of nothing by a Creator?*

A. Buddha taught that two things are eternal; namely, "Akása" and "Nirvána." Everything has come out of Akása in obedience to a law of motion inherent in it, and, after a certain existence, passes away. Nothing ever came out of nothing. Buddhists do not believe in miracles; hence they deny creation, and cannot conceive of a Creator.[1]

phenomenon [of sexual procreation] to which it owes its existence. Not only in his own image, male and female, and all other physical respects, does man create the God to whom he ascribes his own existence, but in his own image, — moral, intellectual, emotional, and *spiritual.*"

Atheism? Theism? Monotheism? Polytheism? Pantheism? O ye of little faith, anthropomorphotheists one and all, crouching beneath "a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space," know that *there are as many Gods — no more, no fewer — as there are human beings who have ever conceived an idea of Deity.* — C.]

[1 Since every speculation on the origination of the real or objective order of things is as futile as any forecast of its termination could be, the wisest men of all times and places have deprecated such use of the thinking principle as idle, vexatious, and profitless. What shall be said of the intelligence of those who are faithfully credulous that either the beginning or the end is known, or can be known, of man? What, of the sincerity and credibility of those who make a business and a living by going about telling the people that they know such things? Let the charitable mantle of silence fall about them, and judge them not, whether they be blind, or open-eyed leaders of the blind.

Repugnant as the answer in the text must be to religious sentiment,

124. *Q. Did Buddha hold to idol-worship?*

A. He did not; he opposed it.

125. *Q. But do not Buddhists offer flowers and make reverence before the statue of Buddha, his relics, and the monuments enshrining them?*

emotion, aspiration, or any other *ethical* capability of our natures, we must here again steadily impose the same distinction between philosophic logical necessity and what may be called the license of human *morale.* Denial of a Creator, in the usual exoteric sense, follows necessarily as a corollary of philosophic atheism. Many who will look upon this as heathenish and abominable may be surprised at the following words of a Roman Catholic, highly qualified to speak for his Church: —

"It is necessary to premise that the Church takes little notice of God as Creator of the world, beyond formally ascribing creation to him, but concerns herself with him as the ideal of humanity, — 'God in Christ;' an ideal in which it is impossible to recognize aught in common with the principles on which animated Nature has for the most part been constructed. In other words, the Church is what the world would, if it were given to thinking, call *atheistic.* But atheism is necessarily the secret [known only to the initiated] of every anthropomorphic religion; for it is through failing to find in the world external to man aught that can be recognized as God that the Church has sought to meet man's want of such a Being by constructing a substitute or equivalent out of the inherent characteristics of the race." That is precisely what the Hebrew hierarchy did for Israel when it invented Jehovah. Christians of all sects have inherited the grim and grotesque spectre of Sinai, whom they have no little difficulty in identifying with "our Father who art in heaven" of Calvary. Buddhism is strong and wise enough to require neither of these, and makes no secret of the fact. — C.]

A. Yes; but not with the sentiment of the idolater.[1]

126. *Q. What is the difference?*

A. Our Pagan brother not only takes his images as visible representations of his unseen God or Gods, but the refined idolater in worshipping considers that the idol contains

[1 See note to Questions 97, 98.—On the general subject of idolatry I will first quote: "You have demanded of me the 'keys of the creeds.' I gave you before the key to their moral side in the worship of perfection. I give you now the key to their physical side: it is the worship of the sun. The sun and the organs of sex are the fundamental symbols of every religious worship known to us, all alike catholic in their acceptance, their necessity, and their functions. . . . So little is there strange and recondite in these facts that it is a perpetual marvel among the initiated how even the least incredulous of the laity contrive to ignore them, — a marvel not unmixed with apprehension as to the result that would follow from their becoming enlightened. The blind impetuosity, on the other hand, with which Protestant sects indignantly denounce 'idolatry,' Pagan or Catholic, while themselves offering palpable homage to the sun under the name of Christ, is to us [Catholic initiates] a never-failing source of amusement."

The whole question of "idolatry," with all its fiercely seething controversies and recriminations, resolves itself simply into symbolism, — the concrete expression of abstract ideas. A three-cornered piece of paper, for example, symbolizes a triangle; we may ignorantly or conveniently call it a triangle if we choose, and no mathematician need be angry or alarmed, well as he knows it is infinitely remote from mathematical triangularity. We may piously make it a symbol of the Trinity if we choose, and no theologian should complain if it helps us to understand the idea of trinity, or serves in any way *alere flammam* of our devotion to the Godhead.

in its substance a portion of the all-pervading divinity. The Buddhist reverences Buddha's statue, and the other things you

From the savage who piously carves an image of his Manitou out of one end of a stick of wood and prosily cooks his dinner with the other end, to the rapt ecstatic whose stigmata bleed before the crucifix bearing its weight of agony; from the rudest representation of lingham or yoni to the glories of a Grecian Pantheon; from the prehistoric pictograph on the rocks to the glowing Raphael above a cathedral altar, — the links are unbroken. On the one hand, it is an artistic and æsthetic matter, depending upon the skill and fidelity with which a man can translate his ideas in wood or stone; on the other hand, a religious sentiment, the grossness and crudity or the refinement and elaboration of which depend upon a man's degree of mental and moral (intellectual and spiritual) development. It is a sliding-scale; the extremes are superstitious ignorance and luminous wisdom; but between these no man and no church should presume to draw the line and cry "Idolatry!" Nay, more: a third element enters into all symbolism, independent alike of ignorance or enlightenment. It is a sentiment, lofty, holy, and tender, of respect for any memento of that which one loves, — a feeling rather religious than the reverse, yet far from incompatible with the highest wisdom. Under all these circumstances it is no wonder that the Roman Church — the only one of the Western hierarchies which retains real spirituality — should make much of symbolism, or that numberless weak and torpid Protestant sects, starving on the husks of a dogmatic theology from which the soulful kernel has long since been dropped, should have their fling at Popish idolatry. True, orthodox Protestantism needs symbols very badly; so badly that some forms of it — as the Anglican — borrow a few of the most easily spared and least useful from the Mother Church. But on the whole it gets along without them, — much as Darwinism does without that missing-link which would be so acceptable. Yet, again, it is unfair,

have mentioned, only as mementos of the greatest, wisest, most benevolent, and most compassionate man who ever lived. All races and peoples preserve, treasure up, and value the relics and mementos of men and women who have been considered in any way great. Buddha, to us, seems more to be revered and beloved by every human being who knows sorrow than any one else in the history of the world.

127. *Q. Are charms, incantations, the observance of lucky hours, and devil-dancing a part of Buddhism?*

A. They are positively repugnant to its fundamental principles; they are the surviving relics of fetichism and pantheistic

and not at all Christ-like, for Rome to twit the Orient with idolatry; the fact being that she has scarcely a rite, a ceremonial, a sacrament, a talisman, or symbolism of any sort, to which she is not, directly or indirectly, indebted to that "idolatrous Paganism" of which she is the strongest and latest offshoot and only adequate Western index. Under whatever exoteric disguise, Christian, and especially Catholic, mythology is at little esoteric variance from the older, and in most respects greater, theogonies. A Jewish Christ is simply added to a Pantheon which already boasted Creshna, Mithra, Osiris, Bacchus, Apollo, Adonis, and other symbolizations. A Jewish Virgin, Mother, Spouse, and Daughter emerges from the Grove of Asher to scale the Christian Olympus; Arddha-Nari is reincarnated, and a wisely veiled Phallicism completes alike the symbolatry and the idolatry of the Church. All of which seems the more remarkable in view of the fact that the pure doctrine of Jesus, like that of Gautama, was devoid of symbolism, — one of the very many points of resemblance between the teachings of these two great men. — C.]

and other foreign religions. In the *Brahmajala Sutta* Buddha has categorically described these and other superstitions as pagan, mean, and spurious.

128. *Q. What striking contrasts are there between Buddhism and what may be properly called "religions"?*

A. Among others, Buddhism teaches the highest goodness without a God; a continued existence without what goes by the name of "soul;" a happiness without an objective heaven; a method of salvation without a vicarious savior; a redemption by oneself as the redeemer, and without rites, prayers, penances, priests, or intercessory saints; and a *summum bonum* attainable in this life and in this world.

129. *Q. Does popular Buddhism contain nothing but what is true and in accord with science?*

A. Like every other religion that has existed many centuries, it doubtless contains untruth mingled with truth; even gold is found mixed with dross. The poetical imagination, zeal, or lingering superstitions of Buddhist devotees have no doubt in various ages caused the noble principles of Buddha's moral doctrines to be mixed with what might be removed to advantage.

130. *Q. Is Buddhism opposed to education and to the study of science?*

A. Quite the contrary; in the *Singálowáda Sutta*, a dis-

course preached by Buddha in the bamboo-grove near Râjagriha, he specified as one of the duties of a teacher that he should give his pupils "instruction in science [1] and lore."

131. *Q. Are there any dogmas in Buddhism which we are required to accept on faith?*

A. No; we are earnestly enjoined to accept nothing whatever on faith, whether it be written in books, handed down from our ancestors, or taught by the sages. Our Lord Buddha

[1 Science is the half-way house of the course of human development, — a resting-place of the soul, when its psychic clarity is only at par with the sense-concepts of the intellect. In general, the unfolding of the spirit in man has three stages, which may be called opinion, knowledge, and illumination; or ignorance, erudition, and enlightenment; or nescience, science, and conscience. And these correspond respectively with the body, the mind, and the soul, to put it exoterically; more truly, with sensation, ratiocination, and idealization. The sense-bound acolyte fancies that things are what they seem to be, — a necessary fallacy, in which most persons live and die. The reasoning novitiate knows that things are not what they seem to be, and there is no flaw in his syllogism, ability to construct which is the touchstone of the true scientist. The ideating adept knows what things are. The first cries for the moon; the second knows it is not a green cheese; the third has it within arm's length. The first engenders nothing; the second procreates; the third creates. For the first, truth is that which seems to be; for the second, truth is that which is, or the agreement between the conception of a thing and the thing itself; for the third, the truth is that which he causes it to be, and consists in the agreement of his mind with itself, for it is the method of creation that it shall be but the expression of creative will. — C.]

has said that we must not believe a thing said merely because it is said; nor traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumors, as such; nor writings by sages because sages wrote them; nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a Deva;[1] nor from inferences drawn from some hap-hazard assumption we may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters. But we are to believe when the writing, doctrine, or saying

[1] That is, in presumed spiritual inspiration.

[I will add a significant word from some MSS. ined. in my possession: "The unsaved souls of the disembodied dead, together with the elementary entities who dwell in our atmosphere, do obsess, possess, and control certain sensitive organisms whom we, for want of a proper understanding, call 'mediums.' These souls may personate the spirits of our departed friends, or claim the personality of angels, while they lie like devils. It is they who materialize; it is they who tell fortunes, tip tables, and give spirit-rappings. And this is one reason why such damnable doctrines are promulgated from what is supposed to be the spirit-world."

I quote this partly for the information it contains, partly as a renewed warning to take nothing from any source, upon any "authority" whatsoever, that the judgment and conscience, acting together, do not approve; thus reiterating and emphasizing the author's text. It is the curse of every exoteric religion that it is binding upon reason and conscience, thus paralyzing the soul and checking spiritual progress. I need hardly add that faith in matters of authority is by no means to be confounded with that sublime and potent psychic faculty which is commonly called "faith," — a better name for which would be *self-knowledge*. — C.]

is corroborated by our own reason and consciousness. "For this," says he in concluding, "I taught you not to believe merely because you have heard, but when you believed of your own consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly."[1]

132. *Q. Does Buddhism countenance hypocrisy?*

A. The *Dhamma-pada* says: "Like a beautiful flower full of color, without perfume, the fine words of him who does not act in accordance with them are fruitless."

133. *Q. Does Buddhism teach us to return evil for evil?*

A. In the *Dhamma-pada* Buddha said: "A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me." This is the path followed by the Arahats.[2] To return evil for evil is positively forbidden in Buddhism.

[1] See the *Kâlâma Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikaya.*

[2] A Buddhist ascetic, who by a prescribed course of practice has attained to a superior state of moral and intellectual development. Arahats may be divided into the two general groups of the *Samathayanika* and *Sukkha Vipassaka.* The former have destroyed their passions and developed to the fullest their intellectual capacity or mystical insight; the latter have equally conquered passion, but not acquired the superior mental powers. The Arahat of the former class, when fully developed, is no longer a prey to the delusions of the senses, nor the slave of passion or moral frailty. He penetrates to the root of whatsoever subject his mind is applied to without following the slow processes of reasoning. His self-conquest is complete; and in place of the emotion and desire which

134. *Q. Is Buddhism a chart of science, or a code of morals?*

A. It is chiefly a pure moral philosophy. It assumes the universal operation of the law of motion and change, by which all things, the worlds, and all forms animate and inanimate upon them are governed. It is unprofitable to waste time in speculating as to the origin of things. In the *Málunka Sutta* we read that when Málunka asked Buddha to explain the origin of things, he made him no reply, as he considered that the inquiry tended to no profit. Buddhism takes things as they are, and shows how the existing evil and misery may be overcome.

135. *Q. Does Buddhism teach the immortality of the soul?*

vex and enthral the ordinary man, he is lifted up into a condition which is best expressed in the term 'Nirvánic.' There is in Ceylon a popular misconception that the attainment of Arahatship is now impossible; that the Buddha had himself prophesied that the power would die out in one millennium after his death. This rumor, and the similar one that is everywhere heard in India, — namely, that this being the dark cycle of the *Kali Yug*, the practice of Yoga Vidya, or sublime spiritual science, is impossible, — I ascribe to the ingenuity of those who ought to be as pure and *psychically* (to use a non-Buddhistic but very convenient term) wise as were their predecessors, but are not, and seek an excuse. The Buddha taught quite the contrary idea. In the *Digha Nikaya* he said: "Hear, Subhadra! The world will never be without Rahats if the ascetics (*Bhikku*) in my congregations well and truly keep my precepts" (*Imecha Sabadda Bhikku Samma Viharaiyum asanyo loke Arahantehi*).

A. "Soul"[1] it considers a word used by the ignorant to express a false idea. If everything is subject to change, then man is included, and every material part of him must change. That which is subject to change is not permanent; so there can be no immortal survival of a changeful thing.

136. *Q. If the idea of a human "soul" is to be rejected, what is that in man which gives him the impression of having a permanent individuality?*

A. Taṇha, or the unsatisfied desire for existence. The being having done that for which he must be rewarded or punished in future, and having Taṇha, will have a re-birth through the influence of Karma.

137. *Q. What is it that is born?*

A. A new aggregation of *Skandhas*, or personality,[2] caused by the last yearnings of the dying person.

[1 With us "soul" is commonly said of the spiritual and consequently imperishable and changeless principle of the human constitution; i. e. *spirit*, in the proper sense. In the text, "soul" is that semi-material and changeful part of man which enters into his present constitution, and may survive the dissolution of the physical frame, but is not thereby become "immortal." It is Plato's "psyche" or Paul's "spiritual body;" the "ghost" of exoteric religions; the "perisprit" of French psychists; the "astral form" or "biogen body" of some; and has many other names. — C.]

[2] Upon reflection, I have substituted "personality" for "individuality," as written in the first edition. The successive appearances upon one

138. *Q. How many Skandhas are there?*
A. Five.
139. *Q. Will you name the five Skandhas?*
A. Rúpa, Vêdanâ, Sanná, Samkhárá, and *Vinnána.*

or many earths, or "descents into generation," of the *taṇhaically* coherent parts (*Skandhas*) of a certain being are a succession of personalities. In each birth the *personality* differs from that of the previous or next succeeding birth. Karma, the *deus ex machinâ*, masks (or, shall we say, reflects?) itself now in the personality of a sage, again as an artisan, and so on throughout the string of births. But though personalities ever shift, the one line of life along which they are strung, like beads, runs unbroken; it is ever that particular line, never any other. It is therefore individual; an individual vital undulation which began in Nirvána, or the subjective side of Nature, as the light or heat undulation through ether began at its dynamic source, is careering through the objective side of Nature, under the impulse of Karma and the creative direction of Taṇha, and tends, through many cyclic changes, back to Nirvána. Mr. Rhys-Davids calls that which passes from personality to personality along the individual chain, "character," or "doing." Since "character" is not a mere metaphysical abstraction, but the sum of one's mental qualities and moral propensities, would it not help to dispel what Mr. Rhys-Davids calls "the desperate expedient of a mystery" ("Buddhism," p. 101) if we regarded the life-undulation as individuality, and each of its series of natal manifestations as a separate personality? The perfected individual, Buddhistically speaking, is a Buddha, I should say; for a Buddha is but the rare flower of humanity without the least supernatural admixture. And as countless generations ("four *asankheyyas* and a hundred thousand cycles," Fausböll and Rhys-Davids' "Buddhist Birth Stories," p. 13) are required to develop a man into a Buddha, and the iron will to

140. *Q. Will you briefly explain what they are?*

A. Rúpa, material qualities; *Vêdanâ*, sensation; *Sanná*, abstract ideas; *Samkhárá*, tendencies of mind; *Vinnána*, mental powers. Of these we are formed, by them we are

become one runs throughout all the successive births, what shall we call that which thus wills and perseveres? Character, or individuality, — an individuality but partly manifested in any one birth, but built up of fragments from all the births?

The denial of "soul" by Buddha (see *Sanyutto Nikàya*, the *Sutta Pitaka*) points to the prevalent delusive belief in an independent, transmissible personality, — an entity that could move from birth to birth unchanged, or go to a place or state where, as such perfect entity, it could eternally enjoy or suffer. And what he shows is, that the "I am I" consciousness is, as regards permanency, logically impossible, since its elementary constituents constantly change, and the "I" of one birth differs from the "I" of every other birth. But everything that I have found in Buddhism accords with the theory of a gradual evolution of the perfected man — namely, a Buddha — through numberless natal experiences; and in the consciousness of that person who at the end of a given chain of beings attains Buddhahood or who succeeds in attaining the fourth stage of *Dhyana*, or mystic self-development, in any one of his births anterior to the final one, the scenes of all these serial births are perceptible. In the *Jatakatthavaṇṇanà* — so well translated by Mr. Rhys-Davids — an expression continually recurs, which I think supports such an idea: "Then the Blessed One made manifest an occurrence hidden by change of birth;" or "that which had been hidden by," etc. Early Buddhism, then, clearly held to a permanency of records in the akása, and the potential capacity of man to read the same when he has evolved to the stage of true individual enlightenment.

conscious of existence, and through them we communicate with the world about us.

141. *Q. To what cause must we attribute the differences in the combination of the five Skandhas which make every individual differ from every other individual?*

A. To the Karma of the individual in the immediately preceding birth.

142. *Q. What is the force or energy that is at work, under the guidance of Karma, to produce the new being?*

A. Taṇha, the "WILL TO LIVE."[1]

[1] The student may profitably consult Schopenhauer in this connection. Arthur Schopenhauer, a modern German philosopher of the most eminent ability, taught that "the Principle, or Radical, of Nature, and of all her objects, the human body included, is intrinsically what we ourselves are the most conscious of in our own body; namely, Will. Intellect is a secondary capacity of the primary will, a function of the brain, in which this will reflects itself, as nature and object and body, as in a mirror . . . Intellect is secondary . . . but may lead, in saints, to a complete renunciation of 'will,' as far as it urges life, and is then extinguished in Nirvána" (L. A. Sanders, in the "Theosophist" for May, 1882, p. 213).

[Will-power, or conscious volition, may be conceived as force in the abstract, and is the only "force" conceivable as apart from matter; but its operation is absolutely unknown except in connection with matter, and its effect is only knowable as some mode of motion of matter. "Latent force" is not a force, and the phrase is meaningless; but if it be permissible to conceive of the power of the spirit as ever inoperative, or "static,"

143. *Q. Upon what is the doctrine of re-births founded?*

A. Upon the perception that perfect justice, equilibrium, and adjustment are inherent in the universal law of Nature. Buddhists do not believe one life long enough for the reward or punishment of a man's deeds. The great circle of re-births will be more or less quickly run according to the preponderating purity or impurity of the several lives of the individual.

144. *Q. Is this new aggregation of Skandhas, this new personality, the same being as that in the previous birth,*[1] *whose Taṇha has brought it into existence?*

A. In one sense it is a new being, in another it is not. During this life the Skandhas are constantly changing; and

matter itself may be said, by way of contrast, to be dynamic spirit, or spiritual kinetics. — C.]

[1 Nothing in esoteric Buddhism — or in Theosophy, which is much the same thing — is more recondite and difficult to grasp than the ideas upon which the Doctrine of Re-birth is grounded; Nirvána itself is scarcely farther from Occidental forms and modes of thought. In a catechism for young persons the author of course touches only upon the leading points categorically and, in a sense, dogmatically. One or two thoughts occur to me in reading along the text. The illustration of Question 144 is a happy one, and may be a little amplified. As to the body, the physique, the man A.B. is absolutely a different "person" from the youth A. B.; and not only this, but, if scientific calculation be correct, every particle of his body is renewed about every seven years. In the course of time he may grow less gross, or more so; less vigorous, or

while the man A. B. of forty is identical, as regards personality, with the youth A. B. of eighteen, yet by the continual waste and repair of his body, and change of mind and character,

more so. But consciousness and memory assure him he is the same individual, whatever the change in his *rupa*, — material qualities, the physical one of the *skandhas*. But observe, now, not only does the body change, but the "mind" also; the man's character is affected, for better or worse; he "knows" more than he did before; he does not "think" or "feel" just as he did before, — in short, all the rest of the *skandhas* are in perpetual modification too. *We have only to bridge over "death" with these undeniable facts, and continue the process of shifting* skandhas *after the dissolution of the physical body*, to get on good logical ground for re-incarnation; for, according alike to Buddhistic and Christian doctrine, "death" only affects one of the *skandhas*, — the *rupa*, or material qualities. And what of the rest of the qualities or principles that make up a human being? For there he is still, in the astral world, — in *Kama-Loka*, in the astral *form*, — continuing his existence exactly where he left it off in the physical world when he left his body behind, having escaped therefrom by the dissipation of the "life-principle," or *jivatma*, which formerly bound him to his "corpse." Consider now, as Pagans and Christians alike believe, this physical or phenomenal world to be the "world of causes," and the next to be "the world of effects." Then the individual will get "the fruit of works," — as an orthodox theologian would say, — and that would be *Karma*. But the Karmic law is neither a flash of lightning nor a judgment. It does not "fix" a person at once and forever. It is a "natural law in the spiritual world," continually operative, thus modifying personality as surely in the next as in this world. So the personality continues to change, for better or worse; all the *skandhas* that survive physical dissolution being gradually modified, just as before

he is a different being. Nevertheless, the man in his old age justly reaps the reward or suffering consequent upon his thoughts and actions at every previous stage of his life. So the

the person parted with his *rupa*. And consider, again, that the individual is himself continuously operative, as well as operated upon. He has WILL-POWER still; he has *taṇha*, let us say, — "the will to live;" he has "desire:" *taṇha* is the sum of all desires. But "desire" of no kind can be gratified except in and by matter. *Taṇha* is a gravitating energy, involving a kind of moral "law of gravitation," in exact accordance with the force of which the individual will sooner or later "fall into generation" again, — take another "dip in the mud;" *i. e.*, be re-incarnated, or re-born in matter. *Taṇha* is the impulse, the tendency itself; *karma*, the modifier, the director, the controller of that force. A new aggregation of *skandhas*, a new "personality" for the same individual, is the result, — in short, a "re-birth," necessitated by *taṇha*, determinated by *karma*. The doctrine as a whole, if we catch its significance, simply rounds up a cycle of human experiences, instead of leaving it like a rope in air, beginning and ending nowhere in particular. It returns unto itself, completing a cycle or orbit, — now approaching perihelion as it nears the sun ("Spirit," "God"), then receding in aphelion ("matter," "darkness," "evil"); and so continuing to revolve through re-births, like the earth in its orbit, as long as *taṇha* ("gravitation," "will," "desire") lasts. To put an end to all this — "existence," with its shifting *skandhas*, its conflict of good and bad *karma*, its remorseless *taṇha* — is the aim of the Buddhistic philosophy; the attainment of that end is *Nirvána*.

Of Nirvána numberless definitions have been more or less successfully attempted. The difficulty is not so much to translate the word as to transplant the idea from the teeming theosophic soil of its birth to the bleak and arid fields of a sterile orthodoxy. But any good Catholic can

new being of a re-birth, being the same individuality as before, but with a changed form or new aggregation of Skandhas, justly reaps the consequences of his actions and thoughts in the previous existence.

tell you what he means by "the communion of the saints and life everlasting," while a good Protestant who has read his Baxter can speak of "the saints' rest" and "the bliss of heaven." See further, Question 146.

I am tempted to quote, on the pregnant theme of Re-incarnation, some words of a *Cheela*, very well known to me personally, whose name must be withheld: —

"When a man's ego is deprived of its physical body by death, and is purged of his earthly thoughts and desires in *Kama-Loka*, the conscious unit or higher self [the ego, individual monad] passes into the more spiritual state of *Devachan*, and there unfolds all the psychic and spiritual forces it has generated during life on earth. It progresses on those planes until the latent physical forces begin to assert themselves, and then it curves round to another incarnation. A slight reflection will show how each incarnation must be higher than the previous one, and how the psychic and spiritual forces generated by an individual produce two sets of effects, — one determining his stay in *Devachan*, the other governing his next incarnation.

"The Doctrine of Re-incarnation is the corner-stone of the esoteric philosophy, as well as of all archaic religions. It is founded on the natural fact that effects must be proportionate to causes. Energy stored up during a finite period of time can never produce effects stretching over an infinity of time. The thought-energy represented by the unsatisfied physical inclinations [*taṇha*] of an ego being in its nature indestructible, requires physical existence to work itself out; hence the necessity

145. *Q. But the aged man remembers the incidents of his youth, despite his being physically and mentally changed: why, then, is not the recollection of past lives brought over by us from our last birth into the present birth?*

A. Because memory is included within the Skandhas; and the Skandhas having changed with the new existence, a new memory, the record of that particular existence, develops. Yet

of re-incarnations. If any human ego is entirely devoid of physical tendencies and inclinations, it will not be under the necessity of further births and deaths on the physical plane. In the mystical language of the East, such an ego is said to burst the wheel of births and re-births (*sansara*), and attain Nirvána. When humanity collectively shall have been perfected, and all physical possibilities realized, our earth itself, having completed its course, will pass into Nirvána."

In the above paragraph *Devachan* may be crudely translated "heaven," or an exalted state where preponderating *good karma* is rewarded. It differs from the orthodox "heaven" chiefly in being neither perfected nor perpetual happiness. Its opposite is known as *Avitchi*, translated "hell," with the same qualification. *Kama-Loka* is practically the Roman Catholic's "purgatory." Christian doctrine grossly exaggerates and distorts both Devachan and Avitchi from their real truth, ignoring all but the crudest conceptions of their respective extremes. Protestantism is still more violently untruthful, forcing premature delivery of the scarcely viable individual over to immediate salvation or damnation. Western Science, representing the half-way house (see Question 130, *note*) of mundane human evolution, dispenses with all three, and busies herself solely with the *rupa* of an individual, ignoring about six-sevenths of the parts, properties, and principles of the human constitution. — C.]

the record or reflection of all the past lives must survive; for when Prince Siddârtha became Buddha, the full sequence of his previous births was seen by him. If their several incidents had left no trace behind, he could not have done this, as there would have been nothing for him to see. And any one who attains to the state of *Jhana* can thus retrospectively trace the line of his lives.

146. *Q. What is the ultimate point towards which tend all these series of changes in form?*

A. NIRVÁNA.[1]

[1 "Repress, then, for the future this longing for assurance of immortality, and rather say to yourself, 'If I am not perfect, I am not worthy to endure. If I am perfect, let me be content; I have fulfilled my nature, and God has fulfilled himself in me.' For this at least I hold to be self-evident, — Should immortality be a fact, *the least likely way to attain the perfection which alone can fit us for it is to convert the expectation of it into a motive* [taṇha] *either of conduct, feeling, or belief* [karma].

"Such, again, is pure catholic doctrine, whether Christian or Buddhist; for, as the Buddha-Word says, —

"'To Buddhas Nirvána is the name of that which alone is good.

"'He who flees to Buddha, who clings to his Doctrine and Church,

"'He will understand aright the Fourfold Lofty Truth.

"'He who, loosed from all ties of sense, has risen to the divine communion;

"'He who has thus laid aside every weight;

"'Him alone do I call a Brahmana.'" — *Anon.*

"A Brahmana," — one who has only to die to attain Nirvána, where self is lost, or rather found, in the absolute ideal, in God. — C.]

147. *Q. Does Buddhism admit that man has in his nature any latent powers for the production of phenomena commonly called "miracles"?*

A. Yes; but they are natural, not supernatural. They may be developed by a certain system,[1] which is laid down in our sacred books.

148. *Q. What is this branch of science called?*

A. The Pali name is *Iddhividhanâna.*

149. *Q. How many kinds are there?*

A. Two, — *Laukika, i.e.*, one in which the phenomena-working power is obtained by resort to drugs, the recitation of *mantras* (charms), or other extraneous aids; and *Lokôttara*, that in which the power in question is acquired by interior self-development.

150. *Q. What class of men enjoy these powers?*

A. They gradually develop in those who pursue a certain course of ascetic practice, called *Dhyána.*[2]

[1 Those who may be interested in Oriental systems of psychic science for the development of the spiritual faculties may profitably study for example the Yoga system of Patánjali, an edition of which, edited by Tukárám Tátiá, F. T. S., was published at Bombay in 1882. A summary of Patánjali's philosophy — not entirely adequate, but useful to some extent — is prefixed to J. C. Thomson's translation of the "Bhagavad-Gítá," an edition of which appeared in Chicago in 1874. — C.]

[2 In Patánjali's system defined as "contemplation." *Dháraṇá* is attention, or abstraction; *Dhyána*, contemplation; *Samádhi*, meditation;

151. *Q. Can this Iddhi power be lost?*

A. The *Laukika* can be lost, but the *Lokôthra* never, when once acquired.

152. *Q. Had Buddha this last-named Iddhi?*

A. Yes, in perfection.

153. *Q. What did Buddha's wisdom embrace?*

A. He knew the nature of the Knowable and the Unknowable, the Possible and the Impossible, the cause of Merit and Demerit; he could read the thoughts of all beings; he knew the laws of Nature, the illusions of the senses, and the means to suppress desires; he could distinguish the births and re-births of individuals; and possessed all the other superhuman powers in perfection.

154. *Q. You spoke of a "Deva" having appeared to the Prince Siddârtha under a variety of forms; what do Buddhists believe respecting races of invisible beings having relations with mankind?*

A. They believe that there are such beings, which inhabit

the three, co-operative on a single object, constitute *Sanyama.* But these terms would require amplification and qualification before one could appreciate their full significance. In general tenor, the practices are those of expert religious ascetics the world over, resulting in sundry "transcendental" or "superhuman" powers (*Vibhâti*), of which Patánjali specifies twenty-five, the eight highest of these marking the ecstatic state of "emancipation" or "isolation" (*Kaivalya*). — C.]

worlds, or spheres, of their own. It is Buddhist doctrine that by interior self-development and conquest over his baser nature, the Arahat becomes superior to the best of the Devas, and may subject and control the lower orders.

155. *Q. How many kinds of Devas are there?*

A. Three, — *Kâmâwachera*, those which are still under the dominion of the passions; *Rûpâwachera*, a higher class, though still retaining individual forms; *Arûpâwachera*, the highest in degree of purification, which are devoid of material forms.[1]

[1 A septenary classification of non-physical beings about us I find given as follows by an author already quoted: —

1. *Arupa-Devas*, the higher planetaries presiding over *Arupa-Loka*; purely subjective, formless beings.
2. *Rupa-Devas*, the planetary spirits of the *Rupa-Loka*, not of the highest order, being still within the dominion of *form*.
3. *Pisachas*, "astral corpses" or "astral shells" left in *Kama-Loka* after the passage of the ego into Devachan.
4. *Mara-rupas*, astral forms or shells of persons of extremely material attractions, whose blank spiritual and psychic lives do not suffice to carry them on into Devachan.
5. *Asuras*, elementals in human form.
6. *Beasts*, elementals in animal forms, or connected with the elements; "nature-spirits." The two last classes are sub-human, but capable of evolving to humanity.
7. *Rakshasas*, or demons; the souls or astral forms of sorcerers, who have reached the apex of knowledge in the forbidden art ("black magic"), and have passed out of the general order of evolution. — C.]

156. *Q. Should we fear any of them?*

A. He who is pure in heart and of a courageous mind need fear nothing; no bad Deva can injure him. But some have power to torment the impure, as well as those who invite their approach.[1]

[1 "Attention should be drawn to the ethical complexion of the communications with the dead which are usually practised in *séance* rooms, and also by sorcerers. From time immemorial such communications have been forbidden as being unhallowed. It is only in these days, when spiritual knowledge is at its lowest ebb, that intercourse with the *elementaries* could be carried on so extensively. Too much stress cannot be laid upon the fact of the moral deterioration of mediums [as a rule]; but the real mischief that is done in most cases escapes detection. The absolute necessity for all aspirants to spiritual life to exercise their will with firm determination is universally admitted [by those who know anything of psychic science] . . . Under these circumstances it is not difficult to see how great an injury results to the medium from the subjugation of his will by any foreign influence. Each man has his own course to run; surrender of will is, in consequence, surrender of duty. From this it is clear that mediumship injures a man morally, more or less, according to his constitution, while as for the entities communicated with, the injury they suffer by intercourse with mediums is far more serious. . . . It is more cruel to disturb a disembodied human soul in its state of transition to a higher life than it is to outrage a dying man. Those who carefully consider even these few objections will find why all spiritually-minded men should be united in discouraging such unholy communion."

Numerous "phantoms" or "form-materializations" which the writer has witnessed, aside from such as he himself has contributed to produce, appear to have all been Kama-Loka entities, or creatures still lower in the

157. *Q. Can you give me the particulars of the death of the body of Buddha and of his departure to Nirvána?*

A. Having accomplished his self-appointed task, perfected his doctrine, and pointed out the path to Nirvána to thousands of people, he was ready to depart. The forty-fifth season after his attaining Buddhahood, at the full-moon day of May, he came at evening to Kusi-nagara, a place about a hundred and twenty miles from Benares; and his end approaching, he caused his couch to be spread between two Sâl trees, the head towards the north. He preached in the first part of the night to the Malliya princes; in the second part of the night he converted a great Brahman pandit, Subhadra; after that he discoursed to the assembled priests about his doctrine; at daybreak he passed into the interior condition of *Samádhi.*

158. *Q. What were Buddha's last words, and to whom were they addressed?*

A. To his disciples. He said, "Mendicants, I now impress it upon you, the parts and powers of man must be dissolved.

scale. He has seen many manifestations of other kinds, sometimes of an apparently high order of intelligence and purity; but obviously he could not be sure that the manifesting entity was not an elementary spirit assuming a fictitious character in its vain desire to "show off," or for still worse purposes. See Question 23, *note.* — C.]

Work out your salvation with diligence." After this he spoke no more.[1]

159. *Q. Can you give the important dates connected with his life?*

A. He was born under the constellation Wissa on a Friday in May in the year 2478 of the Kaliyuga; went into the jungle in the year 2506; became a Buddha in the year 2513 on a Wednesday at early dawn; and in the year 2558, at the full moon of May, on a Tuesday, he expired at the age of eighty years.

160. *Q. Did he write his doctrine in books?*

A. No; it was not the Indian custom. During the forty-five years of his teaching he developed his doctrine in all the minute details. He recited to his disciples, who committed it to memory, word by word. But as there was no prohibition against writing the doctrine, it appears from the *Dhatu Wibhanga Sutta* that King Bimbisàra caused the chief points to be inscribed on golden leaves. In the season of *was* following his death a council, consisting of five hundred Arahats, under the presidency of Mahá Kásyapa, one of Buddha's greatest disciples, was held to settle the rules and doctrines of the Order.

[1 "Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; pay the debt, and do not neglect it." — *Socrates*, according to Plato. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" — *Jesus*, according to Matthew and Mark; "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," according to Luke. — C.]

161. *Q. Where did this council meet?*

A. At the Sattapanni cave, near Râjagriha. The whole council chanted together the words of the Teacher.

162. *Q. When were other councils held?*

A. A second, at Vaisàli, in the Wâlukarama temple, a century after, under the presidency of Yasat Thera; a third at Patna, in the two hundred and twenty-sixth year of the Buddhist era, in the Asokarama temple, under the presidency of Moggaliputtatissa and the patronage of the great King Asoka.

163. *Q. Who was King Asoka?*

A. King of Magadha, and the most powerful monarch of his time in Asia. He was converted to Buddhism in the tenth year of his reign, and became most devoted to its spread throughout the world. He was a good king, and his name is honored and beloved wherever there are Buddhists.

164. *Q. What did he do for Buddhism?*

A. He built dagobas and monasteries, established gardens and hospitals, not only for men, but also for animals, and enjoined upon all his subjects the observance of the moral precepts of Buddha. He also sent missionaries, after the Council of Patna, to carry the Buddhist religion to many different countries, and ambassadors to four Greek kings to inform them about Buddha's doctrine. To keep the religion pure, he established in his own country the office of minister of

justice and religion. The King also appointed officials to promote the education of women in the principles of Buddha.

165. *Q. What tangible proof is there of all this?*

A. Within the last fifty years there have been discovered in various parts of India and Afghanistan the edicts of King Asoka engraven on rocks and stone pillars. They have been translated into English and published at the Government Press in India.

166. *Q. In what light do these edicts make Buddhism appear?*

A. As a religion of noble tolerance, of universal brotherhood, of righteousness and justice. They have done much to win for it the respect in which it is now held in Europe and America by all the learned men.

167. *Q. How does a recent English writer, in a work*[1] *published by a Christian educational society, express himself concerning these edicts?*

A. He says: "The edicts are full of a lofty righteousness. . . . Obedience to parents; kindness to children and friends; mercy towards the brute creation; indulgence to inferiors; reverence towards Brahmans and members of the Order; suppression of anger, passion, cruelty, or extravagance; generosity and tolerance and charity, — such are the lessons which 'the

[1] Buddhism, by T. W. Rhys-Davids.

kindly King, the delight of the Gods,' inculcates on all his subjects." [1]

168. *Q. When was Buddhism introduced into Ceylon?*

A. In the reign of King Devanam Piya Tissa. It was brought to Ceylon by Mahinda, King Asoka's own son, who had become a priest. The King of Ceylon received with great favor him and the six priests accompanying him, became a convert to Buddhism, and built the Thúpàràma Dagoba at Anuràdhapura. The sister of Mahinda, Sanghamitta, who had also entered the Order, came to Ceylon some time after with a party of Buddhist nuns, and instructed many Sinhalese ladies in religion. Sanghamitta brought over with her a branch of the Bô tree at Buddha-Gaya, under which the Teacher had gained the Buddhahood. This was planted at Anuràdhapura, and is still in existence. It is acknowledged to be the oldest historical tree in the world.

[1 The following well-known *Gâtha* of Chi-kai may appropriately be set under the eulogy of Buddhism in the text: —

"Scrupulously avoiding all wicked actions,
Reverently performing all virtuous ones,
Purifying this intention from all selfish desire, —
Is the doctrine of all the Buddhas." — C.]

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